

Woman convicted over false allegation of rape

A woman who alleged she was raped by two policemen in a cell was yesterday found guilty of wasting police time.

Her claim had sparked a big police inquiry, but yesterday a Manchester stipendiary magistrate, Mr Glynn Jones, said there was no evidence at all supporting what she had said.

Insults were shouted at him as he remanded Jackie Berkeley, aged 21, of Moss Side, on bail until April 11 for social inquiry reports. More than 60 supporters of the Jackie Berkeley Defence Committee were kept outside as the verdict was announced at the end of the 13-day trial.

The committee organiser, Mr Gus John, said after: "There has been a coroner's inquest, an independent public inquiry and we are collecting a petition that will be sent to the Home Secretary."

Berkeley had claimed she was raped in turn by two officers, one in uniform, while two policemen held her down.

But Mr Jones said: "There is no evidence at all supporting what she says in any way. I am satisfied the defendant knows she wasn't raped."

"I don't propose to speculate on what the defendant's allegation," Berkeley was found guilty of wasting police time by falsely claiming she had been raped, assaulting three policemen, using threatening words and behaviour, and damaging two policemen's blouses.

She was cleared of causing damage to a police van. The court had heard how she was involved in a fracas at the Moss Side police station last April.

She claimed she had been beaten, kicked, and racially abused there by officers after she was arrested during a street disturbance.

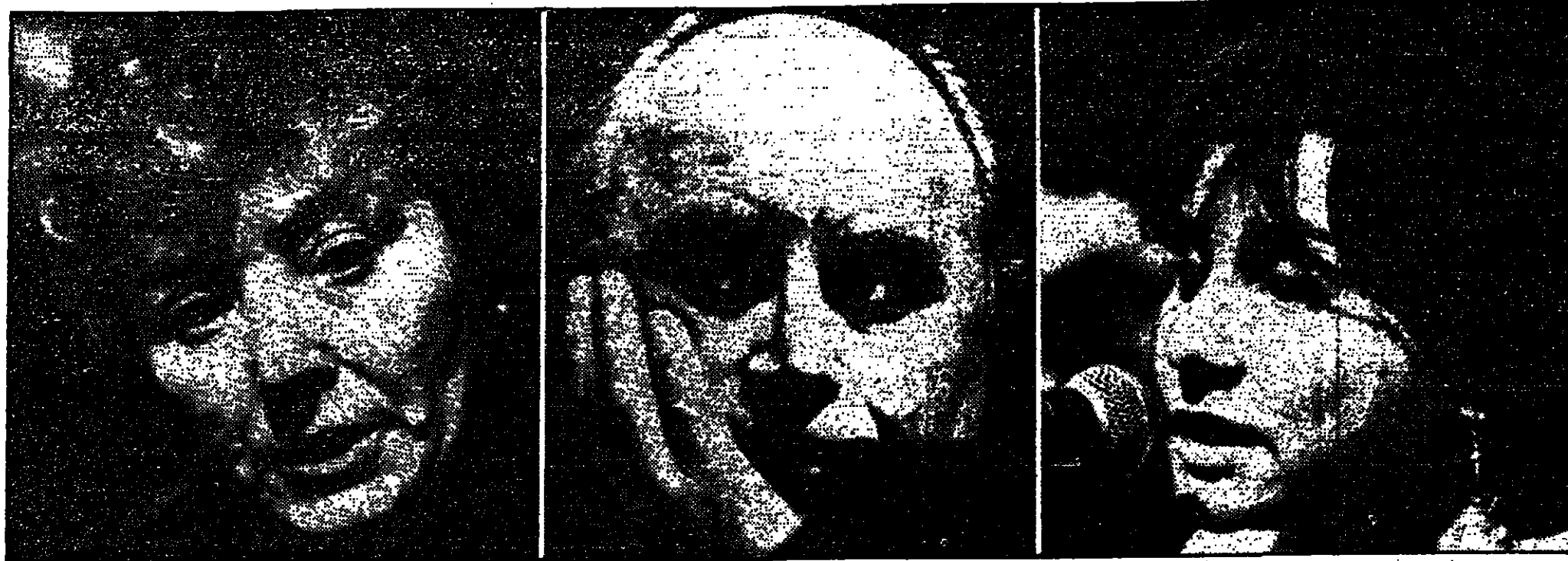
She had alleged she was raped in a cell by PC Anthony Reubens and PC John Fellows, now a sergeant, while policemen Hazel Dyson and Karen Askew held her down.

Following her allegations 22 full identity parades were held using officers based in all over the Greater Manchester County. Berkeley picked out the two policemen and one of the men.

Mr Jones said it was surprising that while Berkeley complained to her parents at the police station that she had been assaulted, she did not "blurt out" that she had been raped.

She first made her complaint five days after the alleged incident. Her defence counsel, Mr Ian MacDonald, said that she would be considering an appeal.

Members of Berkeley's defence committee called for a public inquiry into the case and into the conduct of police at Moss Side.



In praise of women: Norman Willis, TUC general secretary, flanked by Terry Marsland (left), of the Tobacco Workers' Union, and Rose Knight, National Union of Railmen. Picture by Denis Thorpe

THE TUC women's conference yesterday praised the role of women's support groups during the miners' strike, and urged others to build on their example, writes Michael Morris.

A motion carried unanimously at the conference in Southampton, Merseyside, called for the strength and power of women released during the picket lines to be used to resist attacks on working people and trade unions.

The TUC general secretary, Mr Norman Wil-

lis, told the conference that the positive contribution women could make to the trade union movement had rarely been better demonstrated than by the support groups.

He added: "Their example has reawakened in the whole movement a sense of community trust that had perhaps lain dormant too long."

Women had stood shoulder to shoulder on the picket lines, sharing their hopes and fears as well as their food. Now that the strike had ended, they would have to share in the task

of rebuilding family lives disrupted by poverty and deprivation.

Anne Gilbert, of the Society of Civil and Public Servants, said that the TUC should help support groups to affiliate to trade union councils at local level, and should set up trade union courses to educate women in political policies.

"As a miner's wife, I have seen the emergence and politicisation of women," she said. "Many had found a hidden talent, and it would

be criminal to allow them to rift back into what would be a frustrated way of life."

Proposing the motion, Mary Moss, of the Civil and Public Services Association, said that women who had been isolated at home during the mining disputes had collected money, spoken at rallies, organised demonstrations, and joined picket lines.

She added: "Women have developed confidence in their own abilities, and they will not forget them."

Noon deadline for pay-docking climb-down

Teachers warn 10 more councils of court action

By Andrew Moncur,

Education Staff

Ten more education authorities were warned yesterday that they risk legal action unless they withdraw letters threatening to dock the pay of teachers imposing sanctions in schools.

The National Union of Teachers said that it would consider taking the councils to court if they failed to comply.

The NUT is also planning a new tactic, designed to bring more pressure to bear on Newcastle upon Tyne, which has been singled out for threatened legal action. The council has been given until noon today to withdraw its plan to stop £2 a lesson from staff who refuse to cover classes for absent teachers.

If it fails to do so, apart from taking the council to court the NUT will also instruct its 2,000 members in the city to demand individual hearings of their cases.

"The authority is likely to have led itself into a situation where it will be unable to cope satisfactorily with the protest every teacher is entitled to make," said Mr Doug McAvo, deputy general secretary of the NUT, yesterday.

The union has taken counsel's opinion, and maintains that education authorities have no power to fine teachers in this way. The no-cover ban is the most disruptive of the sanctions that the NUT is using in its campaign for an improved pay offer.

The councils issued with warnings yesterday are Berke-

ly, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Hereford and Worcester, Humberside, Kent, Merton, Oxfordshire, Rotherham, and Wigan. A similar ultimatum has already been issued to Solihull.

The second largest teaching union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, yesterday added six education authorities to its list for selective strike action, and warned that the campaign of "guerrilla" strikes will continue into the summer term.

The NAS/UTW, which is already taking action which it estimates is affecting 350,000 children in 16 areas, will extend the disruption on Monday. The new authorities which will be affected are Chyrd, Sandwell, Inner London, Nottingham, North Tyneside, and South Tyneside.

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secretary of the NAS/UTW, said: "Our campaign of rolling industrial action will continue until the end of this term. It seems certain that it will have to recommence after the Easter break."

"The interests of pupils and teachers require that the employers and Government come up with a substantial increase in teachers' pay."

The teachers want at least £1,200 for all from April 1, costing at nearly 12.5 per cent. They have rejected a 4 per cent and an offer of arbitration.

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'Shoot to kill' inquest held up

From Gareth Parry in Belfast

An inquest on two IRA men — which was expected to examine the army's alleged shoot-to-kill policy in Northern Ireland — was adjourned yesterday when three SAS soldiers involved failed to appear.

One was said to have left the army and be living in Brunel or Oman, but no explanation was given for the absence of the others. The families of the dead men later accused the army of a cover-up.

Colem McGirr, aged 22, and Brian Campbell, aged 19, were shot dead in December, 1982, as they checked an IRA arms cache near Coalisland, County Tyrone. They were given a full Provisional military funeral.

The policy adopted by the army for the past three years has been investigated by the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights in Strasbourg. The commission's recent call for a review of the army's fire arms code in Northern Ireland has been rejected by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mr Douglas Haughey.

The families of the dead IRA men said yesterday that both were unarmed and could have been arrested, charged, tried, and imprisoned.

Meanwhile, lawyers yesterday denounced the revival of Ulster's controversial police supergrass system when 12 men, five accused of murder, were charged at a Belfast court.

An RUC detective admitted during a two-hour hearing that all the men, from the Newry area of County Down, were arrested on the word of Eamon Collins, aged 31, a customs officer who is in prison on two murder charges.

All 12 men were remanded in custody until March 22. Those facing murder charges are: Michael Campbell, aged 30; David Hyland, aged 32; Vincent McLaughlin, aged 29; Brendan McCaughy, aged 28; and Ewan Morgan, aged 26.

Seven men are accused of a variety of charges including possessing bombs and guns, belonging to the IRA, and providing safe houses for killers.

The 12 men in court yesterday bring to 20 the number charged following police raids after the IRA mortar bomb attack on Newry police station, when nine officers were killed a fortnight ago.

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700 walk out after 'attacks' sackings

By Tony Heath

South Wales smokeless fuel plant was halted yesterday when its 700 workers went on strike after five men were sacked for allegedly intimidating the only miners' union member to work there during the coal dispute.

The five were suspended after it was claimed that oil had been poured over Mr Paul Watson when he was in the showers, and that he had been spat at and called a scab. They were called to the manager's office and dismissed later.

The morning shift walked out immediately and 200 pickets were joined by villagers outside the plant at Abercrombi, near Aberdare. The afternoon shift stayed away and Mr Watson, who had been seen to report under police escort, failed to show up.

Mr Allan Maiden, the National Union of Mineworkers' branch secretary

at the plant, said that the men had been dismissed without consultation. "One man is able to get men sacked just by pointing at them. It was a kangaroo court. The strike would continue until the men were reinstated."

A National Coal Board spokesman said the men could appeal. "The five were sacked for industrial misconduct," he said.

Trouble has simmered at the Cynon Valley plant since the 20,000 South Wales miners returned to work last week.

Mr Watson's wife, Joy, prominent in the national back-to-work movement from its early days, has been driving her husband to work from their home in Aberdare. Mud and paint have been thrown at the car and a window was smashed.

Police have interviewed a number of people including two juveniles and six women, about the attacks.

Yorkshire pitmen who

returned to work before the end of the strike are being paid to stay at home until temperatures cool, the NCB said yesterday. There had been some "nasty incidents" and warnings that indiscipline, "even calling men names" was a sackable offence.

Men in a cage at Yorkshire Main, Edlington, Doncaster, turned off helmet lamps and punched and kicked a strike-breaker, it was claimed.

Miners at Allerton Bywater colliery, Castlesford, are reported to have spat on and thrown water and urine at an engine driver who said he had received death threats. Strike-breakers at other collieries have been punched, kicked, spat on and threatened.

Mr Michael Eaton, the board's chief spokesman, played down the reports. "There is intimidation but 98 per cent of the industry is working normally."

A statement that there could be a "considerable confusion" about what constituted a "serious offence" was wrongly attributed to the NCB in yesterday's report on sacked miners because of an error in transmission.

The board's policy on re-employing men dismissed for strike-related offences is that there will be no general amnesty; that the board cannot condone serious violence, intimidation or vandalism; and that area directors have the discretion to reinstate men dismissed for less serious offences.

Michael Parkin adds: Nottinghamshire miners are to support Labour in county council elections even though most of them worked through the strike.

Mr Dennis Pettitt, leader of the majority Labour group on the council, appealed to their delegates to vote Labour and to recommend other Notts miners to do the same.

The delegates' meeting also agreed that leaflets supporting Labour would be distributed at pitheads.

They add: "Patients must either be distributed throughout several hospitals (and no hospital can be allowed to refuse any patient) or specific, properly equipped units must be opened."

Researchers at the Harvard Medical School in Boston, Mass., have succeeded in stopping the AIDS virus replicating by dosing it with the genetically engineered human interferon Alpha.

Their experiments are only at the test tube stage, but results are so encouraging, they report in the *Lancet* today, that trials on people are being set up. The hope is that it will stop the virus spreading in people suffering the early stages of the disease.

With 8,500 victims in the United States, an effective treatment is urgently needed, they point out.

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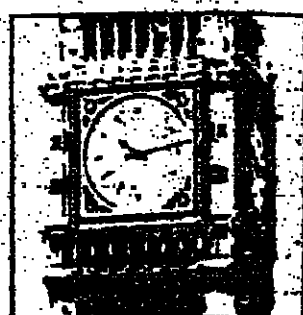
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David McKie

Another crowd gets restive

ON Wednesday the Prime Minister spent 55 minutes with one of the two most powerful men in the world, the new leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. You might have thought that at Prime Minister's questions yesterday she'd have been fallen upon by MPs on all sides, eager to know what might have transpired.

But not a bit of it. Even Neil Kinnock, who's a dog hand at pronouncing it, did not so much as mention the great man's name. Dr David Owen rose in his place and sadly subsided as repeatedly he failed to engage the Speaker's eye. But those who were more fortunate had other preoccupations.

One way and another it was rather a drab occasion, jet-lagged perhaps. Mr Kinnock, much shorter and sharper, seemed to be coming off the plane. He was sought to confront the champions of law and order politics with the latest figures on crime.

His third long intervention brought the Tories back to the fore. It is a haggard question time, instantly to the boil: though Mrs Thatcher, too, with her recently acquired taste for detailed quotations, was less than succinct yesterday.

If MPs, on all sides, were disturbed by the crime statistics, they were positively outraged by events surrounding Wednesday night's cup tie between Luton and Millwall. The Sports Minister, Neil Macfarlane, had quite a

torrid time of it as his own backbenchers urged him to call on the courts — in the words of Graham Bright (Con Luton) — to "dish out some jolly good punishment."

Mr Macfarlane thought that was a matter for the courts and not something he should be drawn on — which seemed odd, given only moments before the Prime Minister had been citing the Home Secretary and the Court of Appeal as strongly condemning sentences which failed to reflect the nation's abhorrence of serious crime.

He echoed a little of that. But apparently not which was no doubt why Mark Carlisle, a barrister and former Home Office minister, suggested in tones of uncharacteristic exasperation that the minister might to make it clear that society required those responsible for such behaviour to be severely dealt with.

He meant by legal means, of course — which was probably what John Grieve (Con Luton) had no relation to Mark) also intended when he reported the anger of people in Luton at the destruction of their homes, their shops, their town and their football club.

The declaration which followed — "my constituents demand nothing less than revenge" — sounded dangerously like a signal for vengeance. What bafled the House, though, was why such events had not been foreseen. It wasn't as if Millwall supporters were known across the land for their courtesy. Roger Stott (Lab Wigan) had met some of the invading armies at Euston Station. At Luton, the police were known. Most of them were drunk, he says, they were terrorising people on the platforms and it was obvious there would be serious trouble as soon as they hit Luton.

Like other Labour members, he wanted to know why police forces which not long ago were stopping people converging on mining communities because they might be set on picketing couldn't perform the same sort of service when gangs assembled who were set on smashing into Luton.

Mr Macfarlane couldn't answer that, which was fair enough, since questions of policing belong to the Home Secretary and not the Minister of Sport. But in general the House seemed to find his performance less than convincing. And some of what he said was bizarre. One thing they'd have to discover, he said, was why this problem was largely confined to Luton. He could have the answer to that now, it isn't. Has the minister never heard, for instance, of Leeds United?

Skipper fined

A French skipper Pierre Fournier, aged 32, of Etaples, near Boulogne, was fined £800 with £400 costs by Dover magistrates yesterday for trawling with a net with too fine a mesh.

THE Rainbows Village peace camp, which was evicted from the planned cruise missile base at Molesworth, faces another eviction threat from its new site at Desborough airfield, near Corby, Northants. The owner of the disused strip was granted a possession order.

Shildon jobs hope

UP TO 1,000 new service jobs have been forecast for the old railway town of Shildon, Co Durham, where British Rail Engineering closed a large wagon-works last year, throwing 2,500 out of work. A Yorkshire company plans to build a hypermarket, hotel, and store alongside leisure facilities.

Protest collapses

THE bollmakers' dispute at Cammell Laird's shipyard in Birkenhead, which led to sit-ins on two vessels and the gaoing of 32 men, has quietly ended nine months after it began over compulsory redundancy.

TIQ, the Swiss fashion accessory watch has now arrived in the U.K.

TIQ is stocked by Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Fenwick, Liberty's, Barneys, Selfridges, H. Samuel, Adairs, Fenwick's, Binn, Rackham &



Millwall manager George Graham discusses crowd control tactics with police. In the background—the problem. Picture by Tommy Hindley

Luton and police 'caused violence'

Millwall fans say they were cramped and provoked, reports David Rose

MILLWALL supporters who attended Wednesday's ill-fated game at Luton were yesterday blaming the violence on the Luton Town organisers and the police.

They claimed that Luton underestimated the number of Millwall fans likely to turn up, had opened too few turnstiles, cramped the Millwall crowd into a confined space and ought to have made the match all-ticket.

They also said that the police had been deliberately provocative, and that there had been provocation from police at Millwall games for many years.

According to Mr Steve Titus, aged 22, he and his friends had waited for nearly an hour to get in, missing the first ten minutes of the game because only two turnstiles were being used.

Conditions inside the Kenilworth end stand rapidly became intolerable. Ms Ann Goss said: "It just didn't hold the number that was coming in."

"I was having to duck under barriers as I was pushed down. What the papers called a pitch invasion was actually the police letting those at the front on to the pitch and moving them down to stop them being crushed to death."

Under such pressure, according to the supporters, trouble was inevitable. Mr John Blackburn, aged 22, said: "You've got to realise that the real outcasts don't even need drink to get started."

According to Mr Titus, the first fights were the fault of the police: "It was just getting tighter and tighter and in the end the police got the



Counting the cost: Pensioner Alice Howarth supervising repairs to one of two windows shattered by rampaging fans at her home in Ivy Road, which leads from the Luton Town football ground. Right: Police-sergeant Colin Cook (on left of picture) and PC Phil Evans, both injured in the violence. PC Evans was kicked and spat on while giving the sergeant the kiss of life



hump, you just couldn't get any more in but they were still trying and it just sort of flared."

At that stage, during the first half, the match was stopped for 25 minutes. The supporters were further incensed after the pitch had been cleared when the police, before allowing play to restart, escorted reporters and photographers on the pitch to take pictures of the fans.

The worst scenes, which took place after the match, were again the fault of the

police, according to the fans. They denied that losing had anything to do with it: "If we lose I might go as far as not talking to the wife," said Mr Titus. "But smack someone in the face? Never!"

They also complained of poor segregation between the two groups of supporters. One fan, who asked not to be named, said: "It's obvious — if some geezer's standing next to you slagging off your team you're going to sort him out."

All cited a baton charge by police after the match as

the most provocative action. A spokesman for Bedfordshire police last night admitted that more Millwall supporters than expected had turned up, but Luton had never before seen violence on this scale.

If the police had been unable to segregate groups of supporters, this was because Millwall fans had smashed through a turnstile and occupied parts of the ground not intended for them.

Suggestions that the police had acted provocatively were ludicrous.

ton supporters who showered him with coins.

Mrs Ekins told him: "Drink seems to be responsible for a lot of trouble and on this occasion there was no exception."

He had told police: "I don't remember what happened. I'm really sorry about it."

Supporter who raised his fist gets detention

A 19-year-old Millwall fan who raised his fist at rival supporters during Wednesday night's violence at Luton was yesterday sent to a detention centre for three months. Another Millwall supporter was fined £750 and given a suspended gaol sentence. They were among 29 people who appeared before

magistrates on charges including assault, threatening behaviour and criminal damage.

One of the magistrates, Mrs Marjorie Ekins, stressed the need to protect the public from trouble at matches after imposing the detention sentence on Kirk Dinnage of Eltham, South-east Lon-

don, who admitted threatening behaviour. She said violence at football matches was "a very, very serious offence."

The court heard that he was fined £250 for threatening behaviour before a match in Leicester last October.

A Millwall fan David Ham-

ilton, 26, of Billericay, Essex, whose wife is expecting a baby next month, was given a three-month gaol term suspended for two years after he admitted using threatening words and behaviour.

The court was told he got on the pitch before the game and began gesturing at Lu-

ton supporters who showered him with coins.

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Cardinal's UN plea 'could lead to war'

By Gareth Parry in Belfast

The Prime Minister of All Ireland's idea that a United Nations peacekeeping force should replace the British Army in Northern Ireland could lead to civil war, it was claimed yesterday.

The primate, Cardinal Tomás O Fiaich, faced the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, the Reverend Howard Cromie, at a press conference to announce arrangements for a St Patrick's Day ecumenical service at Down Cathedral on Sunday.

Dr Cromie said the cardinal's words contained "the seeds of religious conflict, which could easily lead to civil war."

Cardinal O Fiaich has just returned from the United States, where he blamed partition for Northern Ireland's troubles. He said his statement about the UN, made in a television programme recorded last year, was a throwaway remark. The programme will be broadcast on Sunday.

Dr Cromie, sitting a few feet from the cardinal, said his words had created more division among Irish church leaders than anything since the troubles began.

"This is the time for honest, straight speaking," he said. "I don't want to pursue this any further. It can only lead to sectarian strife."

It was understood that the leaders of the three main Protestant churches were advised before the conference not to fuel the controversy.

Dr Cromie said the cardinal's "troops" statement, could only give comfort to the IRA. His call for the introduction of the UN could be regarded as a calculated insult to the security forces.

The cardinal said: "I have condemned the IRA on many occasions and that is well known. I have always condemned violence when it was in my own diocese."

"When anyone says anything critical of the political situation, it is very easy for the politicians to rush in and say that he is giving succour to the IRA. I resent that."

Wage inspectors 'pressed to allow illegal rates'

By Peter Hetherington

Wages inspectors are being encouraged by the Government to ignore illegal underpayments to force down pay, Mr John Smith, Labour's trade and industry spokesman, said yesterday.

He made the allegation as a report revealed that 440,000 workers in the North of England — 42 per cent of the workforce — are low paid.

The report, by the Low Pay Unit for the General, Municipal and Boilermakers' Unions (GMBATU) and five northern county councils, aims to demolish the popular view that workers are pricing themselves out of jobs.

Speaking at a news conference to launch the report, Mr Smith said the number of people receiving wages below the Council of Europe's "decent level" of around £108 a week was increasing alarmingly.

He claimed that the Government was conspiring to ensure that employers did not observe the law by encouraging wages inspectors not to bring low pay prosecutions. Since 1979, the number of inspectors in the North had been cut from 10 to seven.

The report, which has been sent to the Prime Minister, notes that the Government continually repeats that the extension of the low-paid jobs sector is the solution to unemployment.

"If private enterprise is to provide recovery and jobs in

the region, then (the Government says) pay levels need to be lower and profits higher," it says.

Yet unemployment was accelerating in the region while low pay led to reduced spending power, depressed demand and the collapse of businesses.

The report, which Mr Robin Small, a researcher at the Low Pay Unit, cited the example of a 17-year-old youth from Washington New Town, Tyne and Wear, who was paid £33.00 for a 45-hour week, as a trainee carpet cleaner.

The pay was 1p less than the national insurance threshold, which meant the employer did not have to pay a 54 contribution. But he received, ironically, £15 subsidy from the Government under its Young Workers scheme.

The director of the Low Pay Unit, Mr Chris Pond, said 82 per cent of firms visited during the survey were found to be underpaying workers, and this is a criminal offence.

James Lewis adds: Nearly three-quarters of the young people living in high-rise flats in Hulme, Manchester, are out of work, according to a report published yesterday.

The report, compiled for Greater Manchester Council's planning committee, shows that people under 20 are suffering more from unemployment than any other age group.

Two Nations: Poverty Wages in the North. Low Pay Unit, pamphlet No 35, 9 Upper Berkeley Street, London.

Council to monitor MPs 'who betray constituents'

Tameside council, in Greater Manchester, is planning to monitor the voting habits of Conservative MPs for constituencies in the North-west to demonstrate how the region is being "betrayed" at Westminster.

The Labour council's leader, Mr Roy Oxbam, claims that Conservatives are supporting their party instead of their constituents, but that the electors never learn how their MPs vote on various issues because local papers do not give the figures.

As evidence of Parliamentary neglect, Mr Oxbam cites among other things the level of rate support grant (44 per cent higher in the South-east

than in the North) and spending on the arts (£2.37 per head of population in London compared with 45p in the North-west).

When the local Labour MP, Mr Tom Penfold, who represents Salford and Stalybridge, said in the Commons this week that the performance of MPs might in future be monitored, Mrs Edwina Currie, the Tory MP for Derbyshire South, accused him of breaching the independence of members. But the Speaker ruled the remark in order.

A spokesman for Tameside council, where Labour men best outnumber Tories by five to one, said it had not definitely been decided to appoint a monitoring official.

Vets urge action against TB badgers

By Rosemary Collins, Agricultural Correspondent

Badgers must be controlled as pests as long as some are infected with bovine tuberculosis, which spreads to cattle, the British Veterinary Association said yesterday.

Staff employed by the Ministry of Agriculture to trap badgers near to infected cattle

"should carry out a prompt and thorough job undeterred by so-called badger protection groups," the vets say. "Too often there have been delays in trapping infected badgers, and the extent of badger clearance has been inadequate."

The BVA believes that the Ministry has been too lenient towards badgers, and has allowed sentiment to creep in. "We must question the practice, when a badger clearance operation, in progress, of releasing lactating female badgers which are caught during the period February to April, although we appreciate the sentiment that prompts such action," the vets report.

The BVA has no doubt that badgers carry bovine tuberculosis, but its claim is contested

by badger protection groups, which seem to favour solutions which would leave the badgers relatively unmolested.

Such a policy would lead to an escalating bill for cattle testing and for cash compensation to farmers with infected herds, the vets say.

Badger gassing was used by the Ministry of Agriculture from 1975 to 1982, but this has been replaced by trapping, although the use of armed marksmen, netting, and snares are permitted in extreme cases.

In 1983 the ministry's staff trapped 1,239 badgers, of which 154 had bovine tuberculosis. Members of the public delivered a further 1,606 dead badgers to the ministry, and 25 were infected.

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Demand that the Phalange reverse policy towards Syria

Christians in opposition over Beirut barricades

Beirut: Christian militiamen opposed to Syrian powerbroking in Lebanon yesterday sought to strengthen backing for an armed revolt that has provoked a political crisis and brought rival Christian gunmen into confrontation.

Schools were closed for the second day running in Christian East Beirut, and traffic in usually congested areas was light. Gunmen loyal to President Gemayel and the Phalange party, the dominant Christian political group, manned a barricade blocking traffic on the coast road north of Beirut.

North of the barricade, opposing gunmen commanded by a rebel militia leader, Samir Geagea, were massing heavy guns and vehicles, eyewitnesses said.

Phalange radio said that Geagea would hold talks today with the head of the strong Lebanese Forces militia, Fuad Abu Nader, who Geagea aides say is sympathetic to Geagea's demands that the Phalange party reverse a recent rapprochement with Syria.

Syria, the main powerbroker in Lebanon, supports an accord reached three days ago between rival Lebanese politicians that would cancel several

laws long opposed by Muslim leaders.

The Shi'ite Muslim Amal movement, and the mainly Druze Progressive Socialist Party, have sent envoys to Damascus to discuss the issue with Syrian officials.

Geagea, who enjoys strong support in the Becharre area of northern Lebanon, sent gunmen into Christian areas further south.

The respected An-Nahar daily said that Syrian troops, which control northern and eastern Lebanon, had surrounded Becharre, and tension in the area was growing.

Phalange radio said that yesterday's meeting between Geagea, the Lebanese Forces' intelligence chief, Elie Hobeika, and Abu Nader would seek to develop a collective leadership for the militia.

Newspapers reported that the revolt by Geagea, who was given an Israeli military escort out of the Shouf mountains in 1983 after fierce Christian-Druze fighting there, had made Damascus and Lebanese officials suspect Israeli complicity.

The leftist As-Saifi commented: "It is not permissible for Israel to return to the north at the time it is preparing to leave the south."



Focus for controversy: in addition to malnutrition, Ethiopian Jews in Israel now find themselves victims of a Rabbinical row

Rabbis feud over fate of airlifted Falashas

Ethiopian Jews to fight 'insulting' conversion ceremony

From David Landau in Jerusalem

THE ETHIOPIAN Jews or Falashas, who were airlifted to Israel two months ago, have become the subjects — and the victims — of a heated controversy between Israel's leading rabbis.

At issue is their Jewishness. Are they, as they claim, the authentic descendants of some long-lost Israelite tribe which made its way to Ethiopia during Biblical times? Or are they indigenous Africans who, for reasons lost in antiquity, adopted elements of the Jewish faith and subsequently identified themselves as Jews?

The distinction is not merely anthropological: if the Ethiopians are not recognised as authentic Jews, they must undergo a conversion ceremony before they can be registered as Jews under Israeli law. This, indeed, is what the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem is demanding of them.

But the newcomers, many of whom suffered years of hardship and discrimination in Ethiopia because of their Jewishness, regard the demand as an intolerable insult to their personal and communal pride.

The two former chief rabbis of Israel, moreover, Rabbi Shimon Goren and Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, have sided with the Ethiopians and issued a contrary ruling: that they require no conversion and are as Jewish as anyone else.

A third rabbi, David Chelouche of Natanya, recently consecrated a marriage between two young Ethiopian immigrants without requiring them first to undergo conversion.

Conversion to Judaism, under the orthodox law of Halacha which governs religious life here, usually comprises circumcision for males, ritual immersion in water, and a solemn undertaking made before three rabbis to observe all the practices and prohibitions of the Halachic code.

If a would-be convert is already circumcised, the Halacha requires a symbolic drawing of blood, to mark his "joining the Covenant".

Today's chief rabbis, Abraham Shapira and Mordechai Eliahu, have agreed to dispense with this latter requirement in the case of the Ethiopians, who are all (both males and females) circumcised as babies. But the chief rabbis insist on the ritual immersion and the formal declaration of faith.

They explain that even if the Ethiopians are an authentic Israelite tribe, they seem to have mingled with other tribes during their millennia-long isolation from the rest of Jewry.

Their religious customs are "strange to us," the two rabbis have written. Their marriage contracts are not contracted according to post-Biblical Jewish law — and as a result some of them, legally speaking, might be considered illegitimate.

It would be in the Ethiopians' long-term interests, therefore, the chief rabbis argue, for them to undergo a conversion ceremony now. This would automatically regularise any marriages or doubts about their Jewishness and their personal status under Jewish law.

This ruling has been endorsed by most orthodox rabbis here and in the US.

Indeed many Halachic scholars have disapproved of the two chief rabbis' decision to waive the symbolic circumcision requirement.

But leaders of the Ethiopian community have rejected the idea that their people need any conversion at all. They are urging the newcomers to demonstrate against the rabbinical ruling.

They won unexpected support from the former Sephardic (oriental) chief rabbi, Ovadia Yosef, who is widely recognised as a foremost religious authority. Rabbi Yosef accused his fellow rabbis of ethnic prejudice and said that if Western (Ashkenazic) Jews refused to recognise the Ethiopians the Sephardic Jews would show no such bias.

Rabbi Yosef's position has now been approved by the former Ashkenazic chief rabbi, Shlomo Goren. Citing ancient writings and a legal responsum by a 15th century Egyptian Jewish scholar, Rabbi Goren ruled that the Ethiopians are genuine descendants of the Israelite tribe of Dan.

Rabbi Goren and Yosef have yet to explain, though, why during their term as chief rabbis (1973-82) they both insisted that Ethiopian immigrants undergo conversion.

Some 3,000 Ethiopians managed to reach Israel, and all were required to convert by order of the chief rabbinate. The Jewish Agency, which is the international Zionist organisation responsible for immigration to Israel, prefers to obey today's chief rabbis. It is urging the Ethiopian leaders here to set aside their injured feelings and comply with the Rabbinical requirements.

Bazargan attacks Khomeini rule

By Liz Thurgood

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's first prime minister and half his cabinet have called for a return to constitutional rule, in a critical open letter that is now circulating underground in Tehran.

Entitled "A warning," the two-page letter has been signed by Dr Mehdi Bazargan and 25 others who criticise the regime for "the economic and political crises" that have combined to "create a national anxiety" and led to a "lack of basic freedoms."

Unlike most authors of tracts attacking the regime, Dr Bazargan and his former cabinet colleagues are resident in Iran. As leader of the Freedom Movement, the former prime minister maintains an office in Tehran which has often sided several times by financial supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The letter — whose signatories include former ministers of foreign affairs, justice, commerce, and the interior — warns that the many "major crises" will "serve to undermine Iran's foundations."

On the economic front, Dr Bazargan blames the regime for failing to solve unemployment, growing dependency on imports, rising inflation, tax increases, and, perhaps most damningly, the continuing war with Iraq.

Politically, the crisis is exemplified by official ignorance and egomania, bureaucratic "anarchy" and "unwillingness to respect the Constitution." Such "violations, ignoring and encroaching on the nation's rights, ultimately lead to the belief among people that the Government lacks legitimacy and lawfulness."

Reminding leaders that the revolution which overthrew the Shah in 1979 was determined by the people, the letter says that the only way to safeguard Iran's freedom — from both coup attempt and Western involvement — is through the continuing participation of Iranians in their country's affairs.

Such is not possible without freedom of speech, press, and public gathering. The letter describes Iranians as insecure, fearing to "scrutinise or criticise the decisions and practices of their leaders."

The letter — the third in six months — appeared in Tehran on February 4, as religious leaders were preparing to mark Ayatollah Khomeini's takeover six years ago. The Freedom Party headquarters were raided and several arrests were reported.

America expected to evacuate embassy staff and other citizens from Beirut

From Mark Tran in Washington

There are growing expectations in Washington that the Administration is about to evacuate from Lebanon the rest of its embassy staff and other Americans or foreigners who want to leave — possibly as soon as the weekend.

About 30 Americans are still working under the Ambassador, Mr Reginald Bartholomew, at the fortified embassy residence in East Beirut. The number of US citizens and other foreigners is estimated at 1,400.

No final decision has yet been taken, but the status of the embassy staff is under review daily. Should the US decide on a pullout, the aircraft carrier, Eisenhower, and the guided-missile destroyer,

Mississippi, now in the eastern Mediterranean, are on hand to help.

The White House said yesterday that some US embassy personnel had been evacuated from Beirut as a temporary measure, because of unsettled conditions there. He said the ambassador remained at his post.

Matters have come to a head because of anti-American threats from Muslim Shi'ite extremists in the Beirut area stemming from the US veto of a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israel. The resolution was put forward by the Lebanese Government in protest at alleged Israeli atrocities in southern Lebanon.

Compounding the problem for the US is the split in the

rankings of the Christian Phalangists in East Beirut.

Despite reluctance to give the appearance of having to cut and run, the Administration cannot afford to suffer any more casualties from its already very costly engagement in the Lebanese quagmire.

Memory of the death of 241 marines in the bomb blast at Beirut airport in October, 1983, is still fresh.

A final US pullout from Beirut would underscore warnings given by President Mubarak during his US visit this week. Urging the US to step up its involvement in the Middle East process, he said that the Administration should open a dialogue with moderate forces, including the PLO, to give them a sense of confidence and security.

Reuter adds from Paris: The former Israeli Defence Minister, Mr Ariel Sharon, was quoted yesterday as saying that Israel's only mistake in its invasion of Lebanon was to let the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, escape alive.

Mr Sharon told the Paris weekly magazine, VSD, that the operation was criticised because it was launched "by the wrong political party."

"If this war had been started by the Labour Party of Peres, people would say it was a great victory in a very important war," he said. "In reality, there was only one capital error in Lebanon that we should never have made: letting Arafat escape from Tripoli when he was besieged by the Syrians."

Israel accelerates its troop withdrawal from Lebanon

From Ian Black in Jerusalem

There are signs that Israel is accelerating its troop withdrawal from South Lebanon as political differences within the Government narrow.

The Prime Minister, Mr Shimon Peres, and the Defence Minister, Mr Yitzhak Rabin, are said to have agreed that Israeli forces will be sent out of Lebanon by the end of summer, but acknowledge that the speed of the pullback can be dictated only by the army and its logistical and operational considerations. They are understood, however, to be urging the military to get a move on.

A sense of special urgency has been created this week, after 12 Israeli soldiers were killed in a suicide bomb attack on Sunday, and the adverse

publicity generated by the iron fist policy being conducted in South Lebanon.

Mr Rabin told the Knesset on Wednesday that the second stage of the three phases withdrawal would be completed: "In the shortest possible time," but he insisted that Israel's security policy would not be dictated by "Shi'ite terrorists."

According to press reports here yesterday, however, the Israeli army has been speeding up the evacuation from both the eastern and western sectors of the occupied area during the past week. A Lebanese radio station said last night that the Israeli forces were closing down the Ansar detention camp, whose position was one of the determinants of the new deployment after the completion of the first phase of the withdrawal last month.

Permitting such reports is difficult because of military censorship here and because correspondents coming from Lebanon with the Israeli army must remain under escort at all times.

Permission may be obtained to visit UNIFIL headquarters just north of the border at Naqura, but new orders restricting access to there were issued yesterday.

Israeli military correspondents reported that the defence establishment is now looking into ways of shortening the third stage of the pullback by creating a security belt along the international border while the second stage is still in progress.

SA peace pact risk

JOHANNESBURG: The Foreign Minister Mr P. W. Botha, flew to Maputo yesterday to try to salvage a peace accord with Mozambique, two days before the first anniversary of its signing.

Mr Botha and the Defence Minister Mr Magnus Malan, accompanied by their deputy ministers, were due to attend a meeting of a Joint Security Commission set up under the Nkomati non-aggression accord, the South African Foreign Ministry said.

Analysts said that the crucial meeting was aimed at reassuring Maputo that Pretoria was doing all it could to stop all reaching Mozambique rebels from South African territory.

Under the accord, portrayed by South Africa as a breakthrough in relation with its black-ruled neighbours, Maputo and Pretoria each pledged to stop guerrillas attacking the other from their countries. — Reuter.

Joseph Haxton, page 15

Minister denies resettlement force

Addis Ababa: An Ethiopian minister yesterday denied that the resettlement programme has been enforced with violence and by withholding food unless people agreed to move.

The minister said that the Government was moving people from the arid north, where it had not rained for up to three years, to the more fertile west and south-west because there was no real choice and because the people wanted to go.

Mr Berhanu said: "There are very many people who are willing, who desperately want to be rehabilitated."

Hundreds of tonnes of EEC food aid to Ethiopia are being sold to traders by Ethiopian soldiers, three members of the European Parliament said yesterday. Paul Howell (Conservative, Britain), Mair Andrews (Fianna Fail, Ireland) and Willy Kluijpers (Independent, Belgium), said that they obtained evidence of the trade during a 10-day visit to northern Ethiopia from which they returned last weekend. — Reuter.

No support for Egypt

By Patrick Keatley, Diplomatic Correspondent

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt received no support for his plan for tripartite peace talks on the Middle East when he saw Mrs Thatcher and her ministers in Downing Street yesterday.

Britain, as the Prime Minister pointed out, shares the American view that it would be sensible for an Arab delegation to talk directly to Israel as a first step in breaking the present diplomatic stalemate.

The Egyptian leader is in London for three days on his way home from the talks in Washington, where President Reagan bluntly refused to give support to the tripartite plan. This would call for the US to join with Jordan and selected Palestinian leaders in working out the framework of a peace settlement. The Jordanian delegation would include Palestinians who were not members of the PLO.

But there was a warmer atmosphere for the London talks than President Mubarak had experienced in Washington. Mrs Thatcher, despite the demands of her two-day visit to Moscow, had arranged a Number 10 dinner party last night in his honour, attended by the Foreign Minister, Dr Ahmad Meguid, and other aides. Taking part in the Downing Street talks and the dinner were the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, and the Minister of State for Middle East Affairs, Mr Richard Luce.

In Jerusalem last night a senior official, who did not wish to be identified, said that the US insistence on direct negotiations between Israel and her Arab neighbours is "of very great importance." Referring to the Mubarak plans, he said Israel opposes any kind of first-stage talks involving the US, Egypt and Jordan, even if Palestinians were excluded.

Mr Mubarak also lunched with the Queen yesterday.

Will long-term unemployment be solved by 9.00pm tonight?

Before Nigel Lawson presents his Budget next Tuesday he would be well advised to tune in at 8.15 this evening.

Because with more than one million people now out of work for over a year, he can't afford to ignore anyone who's got an answer to long-term unemployment.

And that's what we hope to offer tonight on Channel 4.

We're going to set up an inquiry modelled on that of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Employment.

Under the Chairmanship of Peter Jay, four of its members (two

Labour, two Conservative) will be putting themselves in the Chancellor's shoes.

They'll be outlining the options he has for making this, once and for all, 'A Budget for Jobs'.

They've got expert advice from the TUC, the CBI and academics to help them do their level best to find a solution.

If one exists, the Chancellor may well find it on 'A Week in Politics'.

A Week in Politics. 8.15pm



Quick-thinking magistrate douses suttee fervour

From Eric Silver in New Delhi

Indians were shocked yesterday by newspaper reports of an attempted suttee, the ancient but outlawed practice of a widow joining her husband on his funeral pyre, which was prevented only by the quick thinking of a young magistrate.

Mrs Jaswant Singh, the 45-year-old Hindu widow, announced that she would dress in the gaudy finery of a Rajput village bride and burn herself to death on her husband's funeral pyre.

To the blare and thump of a brass band, 80,000 vividly clad men and women followed her and the late, lamented Gangpat Singh to the cremation ground beside the holy river, Triveni, half way between Jaipur and Delhi, chanting themselves into a frenzy.

The wood was ready and the suttee took her place on the pyre with her husband's head cradled in her lap. The crowd waited in awe. Widow-burning is an old tradition in Rajasthan, one of the least tamed of Indian states, but rare these days and illegal.

As the Statesman newspaper explained yesterday: "The practice evokes great veneration from the devout. It ensures a place in the local legends and confers a sort of immortality."

But Mrs Singh reckoned without the presence of mind of a young district magistrate, whose squad of 50 policemen was no match for the ecstatic throng.

"If she is really a suttee," he said, "let the pyre light by itself."

The widow met this challenge to her divine inspiration by announcing that the wood would light by spontaneous combustion at 5 pm. An increasingly restive crowd waited for two hours. The flame did not arrive, but police reinforcements did.

As the constables went to drag Mrs Singh off the pyre, devotees pelted them with holy coconut oil. The police retaliated with teargas and warning shots. Hundreds were hurt in the stampede.

When a Hindustan Times reporter visited the frustrated martyr back in her village, he found her intoning "Om Shiv, Om Shiv," to the evident approval of about 50 women, who told him: "Now she will never eat or drink anything again." One suggested that he might like to lay an offering at the feet of the "living suttee."

In 1979, a widow from a neighbouring village immolated herself. The village instantly became a centre of pilgrimage, complete with temples and a souvenir shop, visited daily by hundreds of believers. Mrs Singh's village will have to make do with second best.

How old is the computer age?

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OUT NOW

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fighters attack Tehran

IRAQI jet fighters attacked Tehran yesterday after the Iranians announced that they fired a missile at Baghdad.

The Iranian leadership warned Iraq against further attacks on residential areas, saying that it would widen the war.

Ground fighting continued at the southern Iraqi town of Basra, where the Iraqis said they managed to stop Iranian attempts to gain a foothold and isolate the Basra province from the rest of Iraq. Iraq sent its war planes to the Iranian cities of Tabriz and Kermanshah.

Falklands rebuff

BRITAIN again rejected talks aimed at transferring sovereignty over the Falkland Islands to Argentina, in a letter to the UN made public yesterday. Sir John Thompson, Britain's chief delegate, said a precondition that the British Government must commit itself to "the absorption of the Falkland Islands by Argentina" was unacceptable. —Reuter.

Changing names

ZIMBABWE has renamed several buildings because of their colonial origin, the Information Director, Mr John Tsimba, announced yesterday. Mr Mugabe's office in Harare, which used to be in Milton Building has been renamed Mhumbutupa after a traditional chief widely believed to have founded the first black "nation" there. —Reuter.

Coup foiled

AN attempt by Presidential Guardsmen to overthrow President Ahmed Abdallah, of the Comoros Islands, East Africa, during his absence in Europe has been foiled, the official radio Comoros reported yesterday. The Minister of State, Mr Ali Bad Selime, said that the foiled coup was under arrest. —Reuter.

Freedom move

THE Dutch war criminal, Pieter Menten, who was gaoled for massacring Polish Jews in 1941, will be freed next week, the Justice Ministry said in The Hague yesterday. Menten, aged 85, was gaoled for 10 years in 1980 for his part in the execution of villagers in German-occupied Eastern Galicia. —Reuter.

Rearrested

PROFESSOR Yoweri Museveni, 54, an opposition MP in Kampala, was rearrested by police yesterday after a court found him not guilty of treason charges. The Makerere University economist was detained under the Preventive Detention Law and returned to the national maximum security prison at Luzira. —AP.

Aid for religion

CHINA has reported to the UN Commission on Human Rights that it has made an effort to revive religious freedom and diversity in the wake of the cultural revolution. More than 20,000 temples of various religions were removed with state aid and reopened between 1979 and 1984. —AP.

Death sentences

FOUR people were sentenced to death in Turkey yesterday on charges that included trying to overthrow the state according to radio and local news agency reports. Three were alleged members of the illegal group Way to Revolution in Turkey. —Reuter.

Unesco decision

SWITZERLAND will remain a member of Unesco at least until its general conference in Sofia this autumn, Foreign Minister, Mr Pierre Aubert, said yesterday. He was responding to a parliamentary question from Mr Jean-Pierre Bonny, an opponent of Swiss membership of the UN, on which a referendum will be held next March. —Reuter.

Gorbachev to seek closer ties with China

From Martin Walker in Moscow

There were signs in Moscow yesterday that the first real change in Soviet foreign policy under the new leadership of Mr Gorbachev could be a dramatic improvement in relations with China.

Mr Gorbachev yesterday had his first encounter with a Chinese statesman, when he held formal talks with the Deputy Premier of the Chinese Council of State, Mr Li Peng, who led Peking's delegation to the funeral of Mr Chernenko.

One of the highlights of Mr Gorbachev's first speech as Soviet leader was his call for a serious improvement of relations with China, and a Tass statement in Moscow yesterday said that he had repeated this "in his meeting with Mr Li."

"Mikhail Gorbachev affirmed that the Soviet state would like to have a serious improvement of relations with the Peoples Republic of China, and that it considers this quite possible, provided there is reciprocity," Tass said.

The China News Agency, from Peking, said yesterday that Mr Li had also instructed Chinese diplomats in Moscow to work for better relations, and he was expected to meet Mr Gorbachev after the meeting with the Chinese leader, that they shared this desire. Mr Li expressed the hope that

relations between the two countries could be further developed in different fields.

Peking's Peoples Daily also recorded Mr Chernenko's front-page, black-bordered portrait on the day after his death — by which time Pravda had already relegated Mr Chernenko to an inside page.

Sino-Soviet relations had already shown distinct signs of improvement in Mr Chernenko's last months in office. Last December, in the highest-level official trip for almost 20 years, the Soviet leader, which founded partly over policy differences on Indochina, and partly also, Soviet officials believe, because China was wooing Moscow simply to put pressure on the US over relations with Taiwan.

Another flurry of Sino-Soviet detente last summer led eventually to the Arkhipov visit in December. That was balanced by the mission of a candidate for the post of ambassador to Moscow, Mr Vladimir Dolgikh, to Hanoi, to reassure the Vietnamese that the moves towards Chinese detente would not affect the Moscow-Hanoi special relationship.

The Chinese delegation to the Moscow funeral were accorded a distinct sign of favour yesterday when protocol officials made a point of hustling them forward from the rear of the reception line to shake Mr Gorbachev's hand. Mr Thatcher was among the other leaders who were delayed by this symbolic gesture.

There was a big effort by both countries to improve relations in 1983, after Mr Andropov became the Soviet leader, which founded partly over policy differences on Indochina, and partly also, Soviet officials believe, because China was wooing Moscow simply to put pressure on the US over relations with Taiwan.

Geneva negotiators steer clear of attacks and polemics

Arms talks are key to superpowers' new summit

From Hela Pick in Geneva

US-Soviet arms negotiations have become the key to the summit between President Reagan and the new Soviet leader, Mr Gorbachev.

This is the view of the congressional observers here, and others close to the Administration. If the good atmosphere that has marked the opening of these superpower negotiations persists, then the calculation is that a summit could provide the back-up which they will need. It would help to break through the highly controversial issues that need to be resolved for any arms agreement to emerge.

Above all, a summit could help the superpowers to reach new understandings on the role of space weapons in establishing strategic stability.

At yesterday's plenary session of the new arms negotiations there were no polemics, and none of the bitter accusations that have characterised so many exchanges between the two superpowers last year.

After Tuesday's formal opening of the talks, yesterday was the first meeting with all the state principal negotiators. For statements were exchanged between Mr Max Kampelman, who heads the US delegation, and Mr Viktor Karpov, the chief Soviet negotiator.

Neither side sprang any surprises, and each spelled out their basic, widely divergent approaches to the key issues. The goal of the negotiations is the elimination of nuclear weapons and the prevention of an arms race in space, and the basic reference point is the joint statement made here in Geneva last January by the Soviet Foreign Minister, and the US Secretary of State.

Mr Karpov, as he entered the US mission, where yesterday's session was held, told reporters that he "had not yet received any new instructions



Russians 'ready to deal'

WASHINGTON: President Reagan said yesterday that he believed the Soviet Union was "in a different frame of mind" and ready for the first time to try seriously to negotiate arms reductions with the US.

He said that he was looking forward to working with Mr Gorbachev, aged 54. Despite Mr Gorbachev's relative youth, he did not think there was "any evidence he is less dominated by their system and philosophy" than his predecessors.

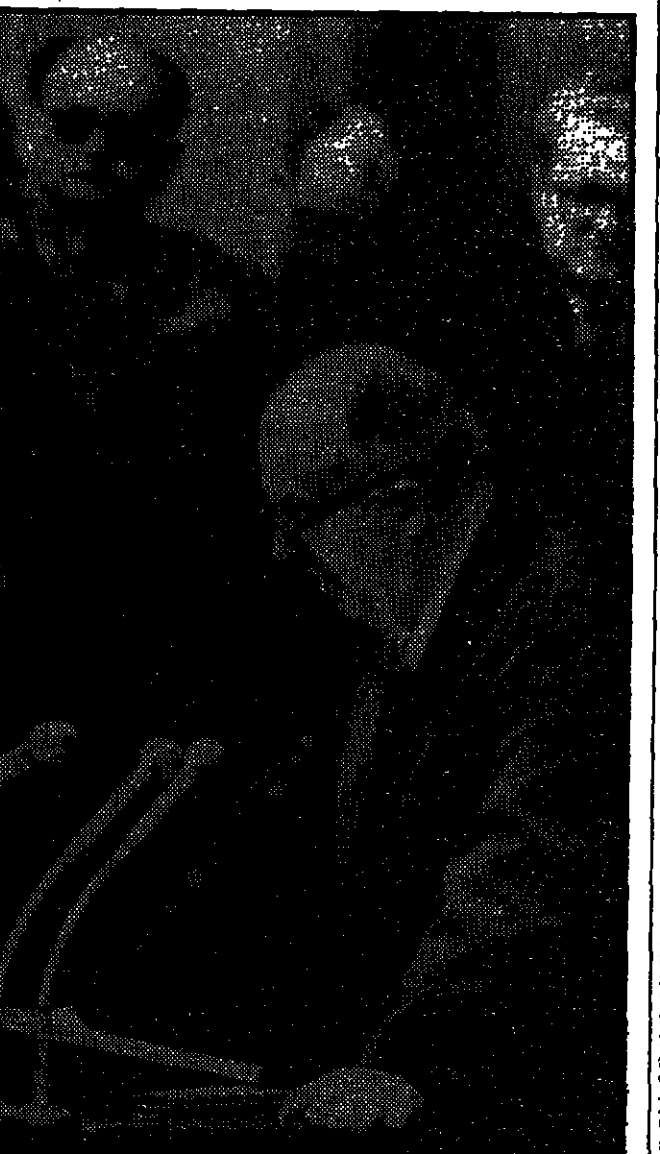
"And it isn't true that I don't trust anyone under 70," the 74-year-old President joked.

Mr Reagan decided not to use the word "detente" for Mr Chernenko's funeral but sent a message including an invitation to a summit at an unspecified time and place through the Vice-President, Mr George Bush.

The Administration also proposed easing restrictions on US exports to the Soviet bloc but said curbs on technology useful to the military would be retained.

The Commerce Department said that American companies would be permitted to seek removal of restrictions on products already being sold to the Soviet Union and its allies by foreign firms.

The department tightly controls exports on the grounds that technology with potential military applications should not fall into unfriendly hands. —Reuter.



The twin meet: chief Soviet arms negotiator, Viktor Karpov (top, left) shakes hands with Max Kampelman of the US, while the Polish Foreign Minister, Stefan Olszowski (above) attacks US policy on Poland in a speech to Parliament. The US has given Poland 30 days to accept their new ambassador

Republicans hit pensioners with budget package

From Michael White in Washington

The Administration's budget crisis with its looming \$213 billion deficit edged a fraction closer to solution yesterday when a fragile alternative backed by Republican senators emerged.

The package, endorsed by 11 votes to 9 in the Senate Budget Committee, would contain the increase in defence spending to match inflation only but would trim many domestic programmes and freeze others at their present level, most controversially, the social security cost-of-living increase which President Reagan had promised pensioners, would cut the prospective deficit by \$50 billion in 1986 without raising taxes.

Ever since President Reagan unveiled his budget for the coming year in February, Congress has been trying to wrest the initiative from him rather than back the President's formula for trimming \$50 billion off the deficit. This would entail severely cutting domestic programmes while letting defence spending surge upwards again.

With the level of rhetorical abuse between the White House and Capitol Hill consistently high, both sides are playing pass-the-parcel with the deficit problem in the hope that they will not be blamed for unpopular decisions. The Reagan plan would raise defence spending by nearly 6 per cent above inflation.

The Republicans managed to reach agreement on a package, which they know will be mutilated when it reaches the Senate, only after an exhausting week when a series of proposals were voted down including the President's own budget. It could command the loyalty of only four Republicans against 17 Democrats and 10 Republicans in symbolic vote on Wednesday. The committee

chairman, senator Pete Domenici, was among the rebels.

With some in both parties urging tax increases, President Reagan had recourse to a line from a Clint Eastwood Western in which the hero dares a gunman to move. Warning that he was poised to veto any tax increase in line with his election pledges, the President furished his critics by saying publicly, "I will not raise taxes on my day."

It is an article of faith with Mr Reagan and his supply-side admirers that tax increases will undermine economic recovery.

Mr Reagan claims that the Pentagon's budget has already been heavily trimmed from earlier projections, a claim which convinced few here that the inflated first figures he invokes. He chides the "big spenders anonymous" in Congress who refuse to back his cuts in welfare, student grants, rail subsidies, and many domestic programmes. Only about one third have been accepted.

But Congress is seriously divided and the Senate Budget Committee (the House of Representatives has allowed the Senate to draw the President's first year) seems driven by a desperate desire to keep the process moving. A rough formula, now on the playing field, would reduce the deficit to \$172 billion in 1986 and \$101 billion by 1988, in line with the White House target of halving the deficit in three years, according to Republicans.

The price of the compromise includes freeing federal workers pay instead of cutting it by 5 per cent as the President wished. Also to be frozen is the social security cost-of-living allowance, or COLA as it is known. During the election campaign, Mr Reagan promises pensioners he would protect it, but he may choose to let Congress take blame rather than exercise his veto.

Brazilian generals return to barracks

From Jan Rocha in Sao Paulo

Twenty years of military rule and 40 per cent of the population living below the lowest poverty line.

Billion-dollar hydroelectric dams provide cheap energy for multinational companies, while schools and hospitals have been starved of cash.

As the outgoing Government cleared its cupboards, so the scandals came tumbling out: millions of dollars of public money mispent in bailing out bankrupt companies, closing banks and to pay fraudulent hospital accounts; and scandals involving shoddy loans, school meals expenditure and coffee exports.

Corruption flourished in an atmosphere of indifference, having friends in uniform, or even a captive colonel on the board, was enough to ensure no questions asked.

The new Government is eager to end this. It has been dubbed "authoritarian wrecking." Congress has already set up an all-party committee to eliminate all the legislation introduced to ensure the Government wins.

The new Justice Minister, political persecution. The armed leftwing groups that sprang up in the wake of this persecution were ruthlessly eliminated.

Inflation and corruption on the other hand, thrived in an atmosphere of immunity and censorship. The social and political cost of Brazil's economic advance from an exporter of coffee and nuts, to an exporter of cars, tanks and aircraft, was huge.

Mr Neves inherits a country where Amazon peasants can watch soap operas on colour television, but people have less to eat than they did 20 years ago. Some 40 per cent of the population live below the lowest poverty line.

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Mr Neves inherits a country where Amazon peasants can watch soap operas on colour television, but people have less to eat than they did 20 years ago. Some 40 per cent of the population live below the lowest poverty line.

Farmers show their power as MEPs vote CAP rise

From Derek Brown in Strasbourg

The formidable farmers' lobby in the European Parliament yesterday triumphed when MEPs voted for yet more Common Agriculture Policy handouts.

The vote went narrowly in favour of an overall 3.5 per cent rise in real terms, in guaranteed prices given to EEC farmers across a wide range of crops and products.

The MEPs rejected the EEC Commission's proposals for a near price freeze in 1985-86. The subsidies are now running at about \$12 billion a year, or more than two-thirds of the entire, all but bankrupt, Community budget.

The Parliament vote is advisory only. It is unlikely to make the Commission think again about its economic plans. But the vote underlines the continuing power of the European farm lobby, which is outraged by the price freeze.

Farm ministers of the Ten, who are bitterly divided by the plan, have to give their verdict before the end of this month. They will start their debate, expected to be long and bitter, on March 25.

The EEC Agriculture Commission, headed by French Agriculture Minister, Mr Richard Cottrel, said: "The European Parliament will never be taken seriously again. It is fiscal lunacy."

The butter mountain, meant while, has been hardly dented by a massive and expensive effort to sell off older stock cheaply over Christmas. There are nearly 850,000 tonnes in stock, compared with an average last year of 500,000 tonnes.

After the vote, the Tory MEP for Britain, Mr Richard Cottrel, said: "The European Parliament will never be taken seriously again. It is fiscal lunacy."

Bonn compromise on holocaust bill

From Anna Temtorde in Bonn

The ruling Conservative/Liberal coalition yesterday agreed to a compromise making it an offence "to insult and defame victims of the Nazi regime and other distinguished persons" after the Christian Democrats opposed legislation aimed only at stopping neo-Nazis from denying the murder of six million Jews.

Under the new, watered-down proposal, expected to be a law, West German state prosecutors will act independently on behalf of citizens who feel that they have suffered insult or defamation from people denying the extermination of the Jews. In the past, it was left to those defamed to take legal action.

Helmut Kohl's CDU and the rightwing Bavarian CSU got their way yesterday by extending the offence to "victims of other dictatorship," which is meant to refer to the expulsion of Germans from territory lost in eastern Europe at the end of the war.

But the opposition Social Democrats yesterday rejected any link between the unique Nazi genocide and other crimes.

Originally, a draft law, first presented by the Social Democrats, was aimed at punishing people denying the murder of the Jews. But the Christian Democrats argued that its application would be impossible.

Letter clears Mark Twain of racism

From Michael White in Washington

American scholars have authenticated a faded handwritten letter by Mark Twain, which they hope will finally acquit him of charges of racism arising from The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, which he wrote in the same year, 1885.

But yesterday's initial reaction suggested that Huckleberry Finn will remain the object of complaints, as it has since Brooklyn public library first banned it in 1905 because its coarse language set a bad example. Tom Sawyer also was banned on that occasion, but Huck has been in more frequent trouble since, for what parents, teachers and academics have called its demeaning portrayal of blacks and its frequent use of the word "nigger."

It was briefly banned as "racist trash" at the Mark Twain School, in Fairfax, Virginia, in 1982, and banned by school officials in Waukegan, Illinois, only last year. But earlier this month, President Reagan said that Huck and his friend Jim, the runaway slave, epitomised American values.

Huckleberry Finn is also defended by many scholars, black and white, who see it as a classic which is, in essence, a sustained and ironic attack on bigotry. With the book's centenary and the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Twain's birth as Samuel Longborn Clemens falling this year, Yale University has unearthed a letter, published yesterday,

Written by Twain to the dean of Yale Law School, it concerns a request for financial help on behalf of a promising black student, Warner T. McGinnis, who went on to become a prominent Baltimore lawyer and civil rights activist.

He wrote: "Dear Sir, do you know him? And is he worthy? I do not believe I would very cheerfully help a white student who would ask benevolence of a stranger, but I do not feel so about the other colour. We have ground the manhood out of them, and the shame is ours, not theirs. We should pay for it... provided the young man lives economically, as should be the pride of one to do who is straitened." He then offers to pay his board — which he fed him until McGinnis graduated in 1887.

Dr Shirley Fisher Fishkin, the academic who authenticated the handwriting, calls it the first direct evidence that Twain — whose family had white slaves — did support a number of black students. She was reported yesterday as saying that the letter was a rare comment by the writer about his feeling for "the destructive legacy of slavery," which had been abolished 20 years earlier. Others supported that interpretation.

But Dr John Wallace, a black academic engaged in curriculum research and evaluation for the Chicago School Board, did not. Dr Wallace said: "I feel he was attempting to make amends for some of the wrongs he had done by writing this trash."

Salvador Dali admits faking his own work

From Jane Walker in Madrid

SALVADOR Dali has admitted that he signed blank sheets of paper which were later engraved with lithographs of his work.

His admission coincides with the revelation, by art experts on both sides of the Atlantic, that large numbers of fake Dali's are on the market. Last week, his former secretary, Captain Peter Moore, claimed that the 80-year-old master had signed 350,000 blank papers to be sold with work guaranteed as "genuine Dali's."

Dali, who lives as a recluse in his Spanish home on the Costa Brava, told a reporter that he had put his name to blank sheets, but doubted that the figures was as high as Captain Moore claimed.

He said: "The figure seems incredible. It would be physically impossible to have signed so many."

He claimed that he had been taken advantage of. "I trusted those around me," he says, "but my trust was betrayed."

A limited edition of numbered Dali engravings, with the artist's signature can fetch as much as \$4,000 on the open market, and it appears that groups of counterfeiters have discovered a source of wealth. Experts estimate that, in the United States alone, forgers could have made up to \$325 million from faked Dali lithographs.

Dali has always had a reputation as an eccentric, and has lived surrounded by a clique of admirers and hangers-on.

Many of them are known to have become rich as a result of their association with the painter. After the death in 1982 of his wife and muse, Gala, Dali withdrew into isolation, refusing to eat or receive visitors.

At the end of last year, he was admitted to hospital in a critical condition, suffering from acute malnutrition, as well as severe burns contracted when his bed caught fire. After more than a month, when his life hung in the balance, he returned to

DEMONSTRATION

THE IRAQI PEOPLE CALL ON MUSLIMS & FREEDOM LOVERS TO CONDEMN THE EXECUTION OF

TEN SPIRITUAL LEADERS

OF THE AL-HAKIM FAMILY IN IRAQ BY SADDAM

Time: 1.00 P.M. Date: Saturday, 16.3.85

Place: Hyde Park-Speakers' Corner to Trafalgar Square

Show Your Solidarity with the Oppressed Iraqi Nation

BNOC propped up oil price, say MPs

NORTH SEA OIL

By Alan Travis.

OPPOSITION MPs believe that the Government will have to bring in its bill to abolish the British National Oil Corporation next week if it is to reach the statute book by next October.

Yesterday Labour MPs suggested in the Commons that a £20 million supplementary estimate approved last night to cover losses made by BNOC amounted to a "subscription payment" to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

The decision to abolish the state-owned North Sea oil trading agency was announced by Mr. Alick Buchanan-Smith, the Energy Minister, on Tuesday and will effectively end the Government's influence over North Sea oil prices.

Mr. Ted Rowlands Labour's energy spokesman challenged ministers yesterday during a debate on the supplementary estimate to admit that BNOC had been acting on the Government's advice and they were keeping the oil price artificially high instead of in line with market judgements. He was supported by Mr. Ian Lloyd, the Conservative chairman of the Commons Energy Committee, who said that the oil trading agency had been losing up to £1 million a day because of its policy of buying at the artificially regulated price and selling below it on the spot market.

The Commons energy committee, in a strongly critical report on government oil policy published on Monday,



Mr. Rowlands: "Paid our subscription to Opec"

said that the Government was actively supporting Opec in defending an artificially high oil price detrimental to UK investment and employment prospects.

The committee accused the Government of not admitting openly that its policy was to prop up the oil price in support of Opec.

The committee's report had been speedily issued before the Commons was asked last night to approve the £20 million supplementary estimate. The energy committee conducted a similar inquiry last December when the Government asked for a grant of £45 million to cover BNOC losses.

Mr. Rowlands said last night: "It is clear that the £20 million loss of BNOC has nothing to do with the oil corporation. It was to do

with the Government's agreement with Opec. We paid up our subscription. It was a wrong decision to keep up prices. I suspect it was not BNOC judgment but the judgment of ministers."

Labour is expected to fight the bill to abolish BNOC line-by-line in committee.

However, Conservative backbenchers last night welcomed the abolition move.

Mr. Ian Lloyd (C. Havant and Waterloo) chairman of the energy committee, described it as a welcome move and "a step in the right direction."

The de facto position is that the Government is paying the BNOC piper and is calling the tune.

In the past the Government has taken the view that price stability meant a price acceptable to both itself and to Opec and that has been the highest obtainable price for oil. He said the demand for stability was just a euphemism for high prices which had led to the economy becoming more sluggish and unemployment higher than it need be.

"This is the iceberg below the supplementary estimate. It is large and dangerous and we ignore it at our peril. Industry demands low energy costs."

Mr. David Howell (C. Guildford), a former Energy Secretary, said the losses could have been avoided: "We are looking at a tale of error which has now been redeemed by the actions of the Government and by the decision to dismantle the official price structure. Things should not have been allowed to go on for so long."

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'Molesworth pledge' gets all clear

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament last night welcomed a statement by the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, that he did not intend to institute criminal proceedings against people who have signed the "Molesworth pledge."

The pledge is a rota system of CND and peace movement supporters who have signed themselves willing to visit the RAF base.

Sir Michael had been asked by Tory MPs to investigate

whether signing the pledge amounted to conspiracy to trespass at RAF Molesworth in Cambridgeshire.

In a written reply, he told Mr. Edward Leigh (C. Gainsborough and Horncastle), who urged him to prosecute CND, that the organisation itself could not be the subject of criminal proceedings.

Though an agreement between two or more people to offend against by-laws could constitute criminal conspiracy, the CND pledge did not

amount to such an agreement. Sir Michael added: "Support for the objectives of CND by participation in the pledge scheme does not necessarily imply such an agreement and, accordingly, I do not intend to institute criminal proceedings."

For the CND, Miss Alison White said: "We are very pleased that people can sign the pledge without fear of prosecution and decide for themselves whether they want to get involved in anything which could be illegal."

The opponents intend to force the bill's supporters to sit through another all-night session at the next session, next Wednesday.

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EMBRYOS

Heavy going on embryo ban bill

By Colin Brown.

The pressure was increased on the Government yesterday to assist the passage of Mr. Enoch Powell's back bench bill to ban embryo experiments after opponents of the measure had sustained their opposition for more than 20 hours.

Mr. Powell (Ulster Unionist, South Down) emerged from an all-night sitting of the committee stage of the bill confident that there would be sufficient time available to see the measure reach the statute book.

But the bill's opponents, two Tories and six Labour MPs, led by the Shadow Health Minister, Mr. Frank Dobson, were determined to carry on the fight and will be tabling more amendments to ensure that the bill is blocked.

Mr. Powell will have to get the bill out of the committee stage by about mid-April to ensure that it has first place on one of a succession of Fridays in the Commons for its report stage. The first date is April 19 and the vacant date which Mr. Powell may be aiming for is May 17.

If the opponents maintain their opposition, as they threaten to do, the supporters may then have to plead with the Government to provide the passage through Parliament.

The Government is remaining stolidly neutral on the bill though the Health Minister, Mr. Kenneth Clarke, is personally against it.

Yesterday, the committee had voted on 27 amendments but had only discussed the first few lines of the bill. Mr. Dobson gave a series of case histories concerning women who could have been seriously affected if the bill had been law. One example was of a woman seeking a test tube baby who developed cancer. If she had been implanted with the embryo, it could not have been removed legally under the bill with time to help her recovery.

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Wets rue lack of leadership as rebellion fizzles

By James Naughtie

CONSERVATIVE "wets" were in disarray yesterday after their failure to trouble the Government with their revolt on Wednesday over new curbs on council spending and were blaming a lack of leadership among back-bench dissidents.

The Government's majority of 121 on the Order imposing new restraints on councils' freedom to spend income from council house sales left the whips gleeful at their success in containing what once threatened to be a major rebellion.

One prominent wet said last night: "There's no leadership for us at all. It's a shambles."

Ironically, he spoke just after Mr. Edward Heath had delivered the latest episode of his pre-budget attack on the Government's economic strategy in a speech at Leicester University. Despite the sustained criticism from Mr. Heath and other senior figures, the wets believe they have failed to provide leadership in the Commons in key votes.

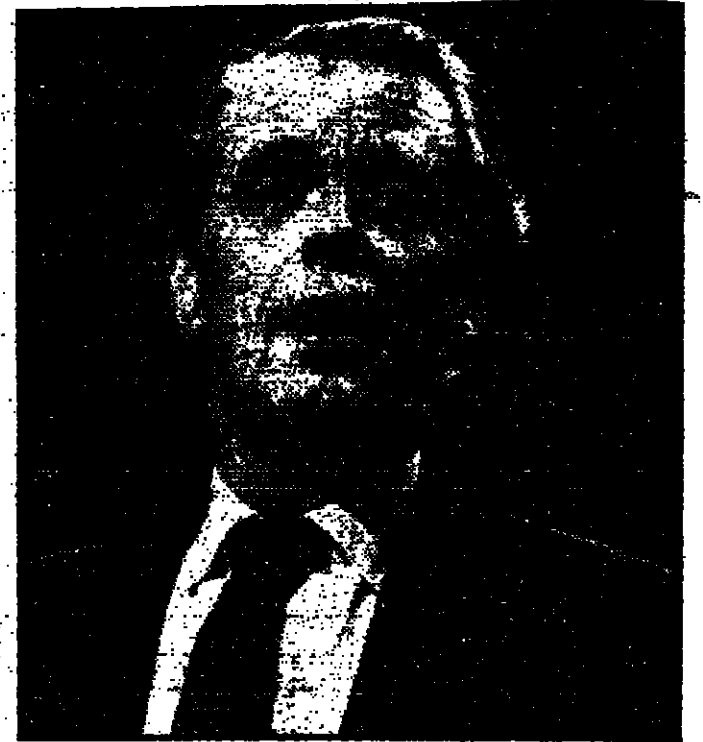
The failure to embarrass the Government on the housing sale cash issue was helped by the fact that more than 40 Labour MPs were

absent. Eighteen Tories voted with the Opposition — with several Right-wingers joining the familiar list of the most enthusiastic wets — and it is assumed that the Government's total of 313 revealed a good number of deliberate abstentions.

But the issue was one which had attracted more than 70 signatures from Tory MPs for a protest motion last month, and the scale of concessions made by the Government was so small that the Government's majority had been expected to suffer more than it did.

Some backbenchers who are disturbed by the drift of government policy are becoming increasingly critical of the refusal of senior figures to take leading roles in the Commons. Sir Ian Gilmour, the former Lord Privy Seal, did vote with the Opposition on Wednesday. But Mr. Heath, Mr. Francis Pym and Mr. James Prior did not.

The younger wets regarded the issue as one which could unite Tory Left-wingers with the feeble showings by the rebels has depressed spirits among wets, who were claiming only a month or two ago that dissatisfaction with the Government was spreading fast across the party.



Sir Ian Gilmour—routed with the opposition

calm the rebellion was that even longer measures would follow if the order was defeated — but it is clear that the talk of rebellion was much exaggerated.

At a time when dissidents are preparing to take issue with the Government over what they expect to be a familiar budget package from the Chancellor, Mr. Nigel Lawson, next week, the feeble showings by the rebels has depressed spirits among wets, who were claiming only a month or two ago that dissatisfaction with the Government was spreading fast across the party.

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HONG KONG

Quelling minority fears

A GOVERNMENT concession aimed at quelling fears of Hong Kong's ethnic minorities after the colony returns to China in 1997, was announced in the Lords yesterday by the Foreign Office Minister of State, Baroness Young.

Second generation children of non-Chinese, including Indians, born there after 1997 will be able to claim British Overseas Citizenship — although

this will not give a right to live in the United Kingdom.

During committee stage debate on the Hongkong Bill, which transfers the colony to China, Lady Young said that the new move constituted "an important additional boost to the confidence of the non-Chinese British Dependent Territory Citizen community in Hong Kong."

It will provide for the continuation of a form of British nationality to the persons concerned until the middle of the next century.

She was replying to calls to the Government from Lord Avebury (L) to provide safeguards for Indians, who may become stateless under the new laws.

But Lady Young said that the Government saw no justification in providing a right of abode in the United Kingdom to one particular group in Hong Kong. "This would, in my view be extremely divisive

in Hong Kong at a time when we should be doing everything we can to promote harmony and confidence," she added.

The Lords committee stage was completed.

INSOLVENCY BILL

Compromise move

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday tabled amendments to the Insolvency Bill to overcome an important defeat which it suffered in the Lords over its proposals for the automatic disqualification of directors of companies facing liquidation.

The Government is hoping to win the support of the Lords for a compromise which would remove automatic dis-

Next week

HOUSE OF COMMONS
Monday: Debate on EEC farm prices for 1985-86; National Health Service (General Medical and Pharmaceutical Services) Amendment Bill (Second Reading);
Tuesday: The Budget and debate; Opened private business (British Railways Bill) Bill;
Wednesday: Budget debate.
Thursday: Budget debate.
Friday: Private Members' Session.

HOUSE OF LORDS
Monday: Shipbuilding Bill (Third Reading); debate on steps to control the spread of AIDS; Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Bill (Report);
Tuesday: Treasury Bills Bill (Committee); National Heritage (Scotland) Bill (Third Reading); Prayers to mark National Health Service anniversary; regulations, and short debate on limited drive test; Wednesday: Debate on Section Two of the Official Secrets Act; Road Traffic (Equivalency Requirements for Drivers) Bill (Second Reading);
Thursday: Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Bill (Committee);
Friday: (Third Reading); Insolvency Bill (Committee).



HELP TO MEND SOME LIVES.

"In one way or another everyone has been affected by the long drawn-out coal-mining dispute. The whole nation should now share in the process of healing needed to restore damaged human relationships and the prosperity of the industry.

No one should doubt the burden of hardship remaining in the coal-mining communities. There are unpaid bills, savings are gone and in some places so is the furniture. A contribution now to the TUC Miners' Hardship Fund can help in this necessary work of healing."

Most Rev Derek Worlock, Archbishop of Liverpool

"The strike of the miners has ended. But the needs of miners, and their wives and children, remain great.

In the mining communities themselves the great need is to give sustenance and succour—to restore confidence and give dignity to hard pressed families. I appeal to all people of goodwill to give quickly and generously to the TUC Miners' Hardship Fund."

George Lowthian, Former General Secretary of a Building Trades Union

"The Hardship Fund is about need. It is not about merit or blame; it is not about reward or revenge. Quite simply it would be wrong to let hardship prevail.

Your gifts are needed to create community once again and to build on the splendid mutual aid which testing times achieved. They will help to nourish friendship, to reconcile those who are at enmity and to strengthen those human bonds without which no village or town can live... Nor our country."

Rev Dr Howard Williams, Moderator Free Church Federal Council

"The end of the long and painful strike does not mean that the hardship and suffering comes to a quick conclusion.

Everyone knows that the personal sacrifices throughout the coalfields have been enormous and families—and this includes thousands of children—will be in need of constructive assistance for some time to come. We appeal to people of goodwill everywhere to help by giving generously."

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos

"Now that there is a return to work, there is much mending to be done of the fabric of life in mining communities. I have seen real distress and hardship in homes affected by the strike. It will take a long time for many miners and their families to get on their feet again.

Many people in comfortable Britain are aware of the deep hurts which the mining communities have suffered. Generous support for the hardship fund is a way in which we can join in the healing process so badly needed in our nation."

Rev David Sheppard, Bishop of Liverpool

"I welcome this important initiative by the TUC Miners' Hardship Fund Trustees.

For many miners and their families the hardship goes on. The rebuilding of shattered family and community lives. The struggle against mountains of debt and unpaid bills. The healing process is going to be long and hard. The bitterness and depression will take a long time to go away. They still need your help. To see some sort of future beyond the crisis. To offset the worst excesses of debt and privation. To help the neediest families care for their children.

The Fund is asking you for a contribution to the future of the mining industry.

Please help."

Nauman Willis (General Secretary TUC)

I enclose what I can to help overcome the continuing hardship in the coalfields.

£1 £5 £10 £50 over £50 (Tick the appropriate box.)

Name _____

If you would like an acknowledgement of your donation please tick this box ☐

Address _____

Please send your contributions to the TUC Miners' Hardship Fund, FREEPOST, (no stamp required), Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3ER or you can make a donation through the banking system by credit transfer to Account No 30077566, The Cooperative Bank PLC, 110 Leaman Street, London E1. Please make cheques out to "The TUC Miners' Hardship Fund"

AN APPEAL BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE TUC MINERS' HARDSHIP FUND

AN APPEAL BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE TUC MINERS' HARDSHIP FUND

صندوق من المصلح

As much as we dare reveal of our latest technology

Do you own a digital watch? A pocket calculator? Or one of the better equipped portable computers?

If so, you can thank us. Because British Army researchers invented the LED (Light Emitting Diode) that makes these things possible.

And ~~you can thank us~~

It might surprise you to learn that we currently use 400 different computer systems in our work.

However, ~~we are not~~

Army officers will probably be among the first in the world to work with the coming generation of so-called 'intelligent' computers and ~~data processing~~

We tell you this, not to boast, but because today we need a special kind of person.

One who is not afraid of technology. Who can understand its value on the battlefield. And, more importantly, as a deterrent.

A short Russian lesson.

Our main task, as part of NATO, is to deter the massive armies that face us across the Inner German Border from ever crossing it.

And if they do, to hold their attack until sanity can prevail. ~~we are not~~

NATO is outnumbered in tanks by 3:1. In the sector we hold, the odds against us could be as high as 7 tanks to 1.

The Russian T64s and T80s aren't antiquated hulks. They are efficient and deadly.

So to even things up, we built Challenger.

~~its~~ revolutionary Chobham armour. ~~Lightweight, yet incredibly strong,~~

A laser rangefinder enables the fire control system to gauge accurately the range of a moving target more than 3 km away.

Tracked Rapier's missile reaches supersonic speed in less than 2 seconds.

Then a 7-mode ballistic on-board computer continuously adjusts the Challenger's 120 millimetre gun for pinpoint accuracy.

Most tank battles are slugged out at close quarters. Ranges rarely exceed 1,000 metres.

In the rolling, wooded terrain of northern Germany, these ranges shorten. The battlefield would be a chaos of smoke and dust.

But Challenger can operate even in pitch darkness, thanks to an infra-red thermal imager, cooled ~~by liquid nitrogen~~

The fastest missile in the West.

Another menace is supersonic ground attack aircraft loaded with three tons of bombs, napalm, or rockets zipping in at zero feet to attack installations or troops. How do you down him before he gets in range?

Our answer is the Tracked Rapier. It can move across country at 60 kph and be ready for action in ~~seconds~~

Its radar detects all aircraft up to ~~10~~ kilometres away and finds out whether they are friend or foe, ~~by using a laser~~

In the former case, it pulls in its horns. But if the response is 'foe' a number of things happen very quickly.

The radar swings the optical tracking gear on to the target. The operator is alerted by a buzzer in his helmet to keep his sights fixed on the aircraft (which he does with a 'joy stick').

All he has to do then is figure out where to send his missile to intercept his target which is moving across the sky at better than a thousand miles an hour.

Tricky. But the Rapier's radar and computer working together determine the correct angle and direction of launch. And they continue to do so thousands of times a second.

At the perfect instant the computer tells the operator to fire the missile, then takes over and guides it on to the target.

Even if the pilot sees the supersonic missile approaching and tries to evade it, the chances are better than even that it will hit its mark, because a Rapier missile can outmanoeuvre and tolerate ~~many~~ times as many G's as any aircraft in existence.

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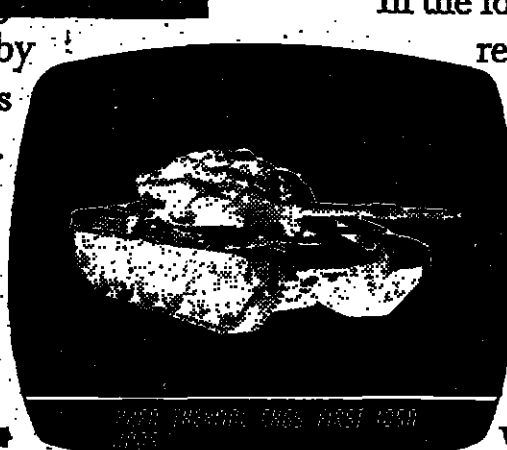
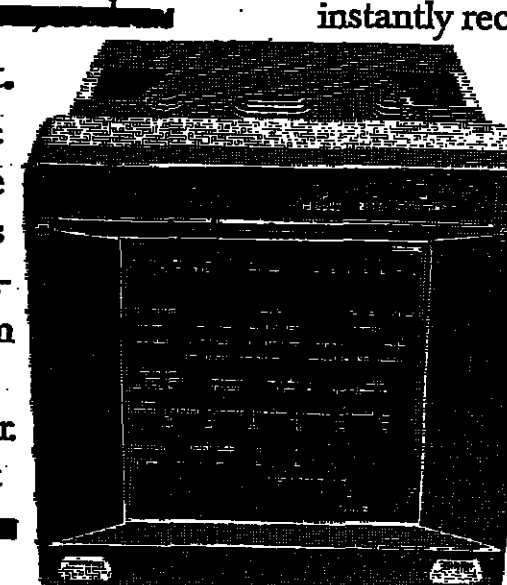
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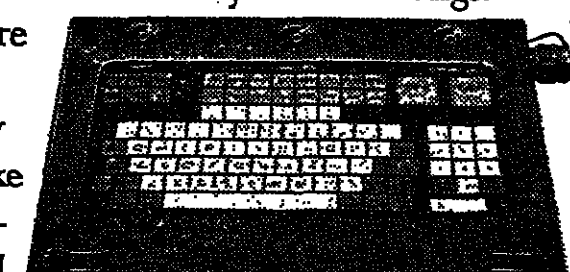
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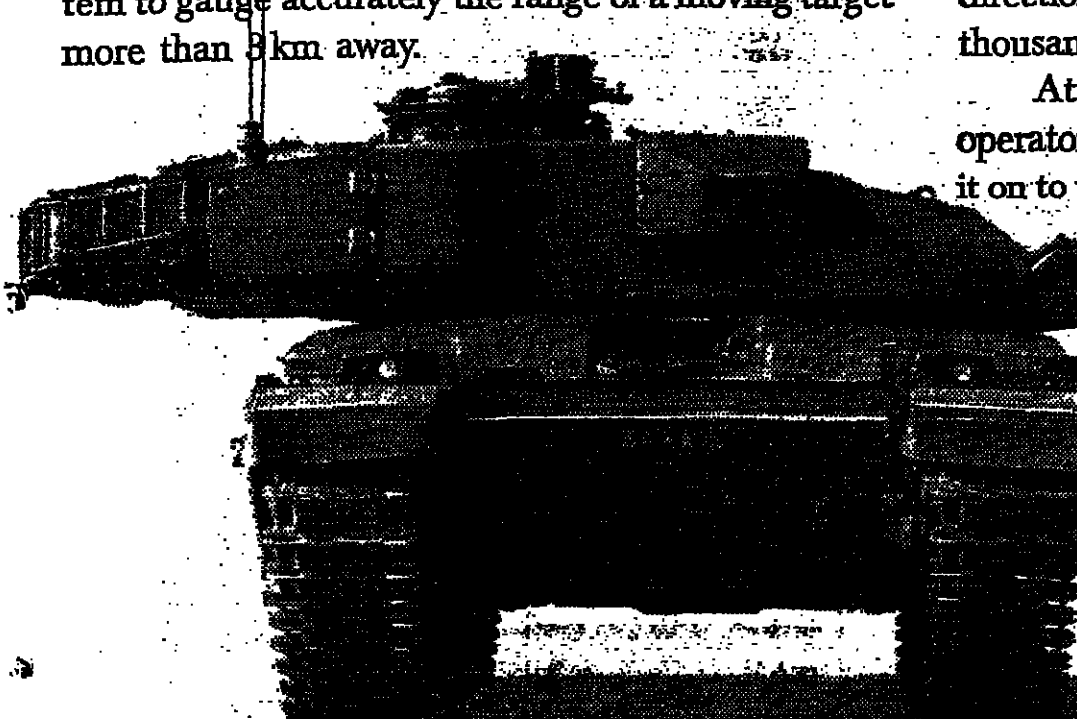
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The best of British food, but the worst ever meal

RECENTLY I had the most distressing meal I remember and it was made with the best of British produce. Food from Britain is the necessary Quango set up to counter invasions of German sausages, Danish bacon and French apples, and to bruit abroad the glories of Welsh lamb, proper Cheddar and so on. The lunch was to launch its Quality Mark — a symbol on food packs that guarantees that the Cox's apples are perfect, that the chicken has not been pumped full of water and phosphates, that the Wensleydale is the real thing. As a council member I've been desperately keen that the Quality Mark scheme should work. Not just because the shopper will be able to tell good from bad before it's paid for, but also because it's the customer insists on Quality Mark food, inferior manufacturers and packers will have to upgrade their products to join the club.

So the trade lunch at Olympia, given by the International Food Exhibition organisers, was a great chance to win friends and influence buyers. Many of the guests had already attended an excellent Food From Britain breakfast and heard fine speeches about the Quality Mark. For them, lunch must have undone most of that. For starters (and that is what they were) everyone started but few finished. We had what looked like cauteen jelly with superwhip on top. In fact it was a teaspoon of finely diced bacon (best quality, of course), a half-teaspoon of hard-boiled egg (I think) and some chopped parsley in a glass. That took up perhaps an eighth of an inch. The rest of the glass was filled with taste-free savoury jelly, topped with a swirl of what-ever-it-was, and garnished, inevitably, with an orange segment.

Shame and humiliation vying with each other to keep me miserable and speechless, I waited anxiously for the next burst of the Best of British. It came, and anger began to oust the shame. How can British caterers let the side down? How can they take a perfectly good turkey and make it so incredibly boring? We had slices of cold, somewhat dry, breast with no sauce, no dressing, no nothing. It was crammed on a platter with its accompanying salads, among which was one of those mixtures of pickled vegetables which only the British would dream of eating. The best of the salads was a chickpea one which, as chickpeas are certainly not Food From Britain, only served to confirm what every foreigner is only too willing to believe about us. The turkey was followed by no means delicious, apple pie and good cheese clumsily and unattractively served with boring crackers.

Our table contained the Russian, Turkish, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Rumanian ambassadors. All those coun-

tries have a tradition of excellent food and they all help to fill Britain's shelves. But they were philosophically polite about their lunch. "Very English" and "British cooking, yes?" they said, nodding and smiling. How can we let people like that think that is how we cook? You would have to go far to find quite such awful food in a London restaurant anyone has heard of, and I doubt if you'd ever find it in a British home where there was any interest in food at all. And these were professional caterers who make their living by selling their craft. Exhibition food is a juicy business with a captive market of people who, as they attend their trade fair once a year, only, are unlikely to complain.

I don't say that feeding the five hundred is easy, although cold turkey can't be difficult, and I don't know what the budget was. (Although, interestingly, last time I had a go at John Sutcliffe & Co Ltd for their food at Olympia their defence was more in the line that they hadn't chosen the menu and that I didn't know what I was talking about. They pointed to the growth and success of their catering company, compared it to my own puny one, and threw in a few remarks about my having to eke out my living by journalism and publicly seeking attacks on them.)

But Olympia Exhibitions Ltd, the operators, are at fault too. Why don't they keep a closer eye on the way the crowds are fed? Then the Exhibition hosts are also at fault. Why didn't Interbuild, the company responsible for the Food show, insist on, and pay for, a better lunch? And Food From Britain, I regret to say, are at fault too. Why did we get involved and beat the Quality Mark drum without being sure that our side wouldn't kick an own-goal? We are all at fault because we just don't complain enough. So I'm complaining.

I have to say that that lunch will bring a blush to my cheek for other reasons too. Sitting next to the Hungarian ambassador I broke out in my few Hungarian conversational gambits, all of which went down like a lead balloon. I tried talking about Gipsy Music, about the famous Hungarian brandy Barrack Palinka, about coulash, and about Victor Sassie and his wonderful Hungarian restaurant in Greek Street. He sat there stolidly smiling and looking baffled and occasionally talking about how much of his country's wine we imported. "Ah," I said, "Bulls Blood." He looked baffled again.

I began to think him either deaf, unable to speak English or ignorant about his country. When he left another of our clutch of ambassadors came up, and I was again introduced to the Hungarian ambassador. "Then who on earth is this?" I say, picking up my departed friend's place-card. "Ah, he's the Bulgarian ambassador."

Prue Leith



ANYONE who comes to Russia in search of good food is an optimist. Reasonable meals in tourist hotels are not a current

priority for any incoming president. Menus promise much but nearly everything's off, including, often, the beer and vodka. Even the Russians joke about it. A man goes into an Aeroflot office. He asks for a ticket to Principle. "Principle?" inquires the agent. "We have no listing of such a place." "But you must have," insists the customer. "Whenever I go into a food shop to buy something I'm told there is none in stock, but they have it in principle." Lewis Carroll's Looking Glass sheep would have liked that one. Most tourists leave the country with memories of thin, lukewarm soup lapping round lumps of root vegetable, followed by greasy goblets of meat that look as though they've been butchered by a mad axeman.

For the foreigner posted to Moscow, it's all very baffling. Lesley Chamberlain's excellent Penguin, *The Food and Cooking of Russia*, compiled after a stint in Moscow as a Reuters correspondent, talks seductively of mounds of glistening greenery, fruit and herbs piled high on the marble slabs of the free markets at the height of summer. That takes care of eating from the end of May to early September.

But for seven or eight months of the year we live in winter and the main produce at the markets (apart from the infrequent dramatic appearance of Georgian tomatoes at £20 a kilo) is bestroot, potatoes, loafbats, and rabbit. The Beriozkas are about the only source during deep winter for cabbages with heart.

Yet a foreigner fortunate enough to be invited into a Russian's home faces differently. Hugely generous and proud hosts load their tables with a zakuski of endless dishes. Like the pieces in an art gallery, each dish is a different culinary and geographical tale. A plate of



GUM SHOW: If you haven't got blat, you haven't got much

Julia Watson reviews Darra Goldstein's book *A Taste of Russia*

Blat on the landscape

Georgian kidney beans, heady with garlic and crushed walnuts, is offered with gleaming stuffed dolmas from Armenia. An Azerbaijani plov of rice, laced with strips of lamb and studded with shining beads of pomegranate, steams gently beside a fine Russian salad which bears no relation to the revolting diced mass that British caterers tip on to their plates of hors d'oeuvres. How do they manage it? No where in Moscow has the envious foreigner spotted any single one of the ingredients. Darra Goldstein, in her new book *A Taste of Russia* (another Jill Norman book whose marketing is now con-

trolled by Robert Hale, £10.95) has the explanation. Like everything else, food distribution in the Soviet Union is based on a system of hierarchies. Moscow gets the most and the best, which accounts for the crowds of peasant women with tea-cosy silhouettes who bulk out the trams and metros each day, lugging bulging bags of produce home to their villages — to the fury of Muscovites who reckon there's enough pressure on stocks as it is without outsiders diminishing them. Inside the capital, if you're not in the privileged position necessary to buy at the special coupon shops, you use what blat you can.

Blat is more important in Russia than money. If you have influence, you trade it for whatever it is you want to get hold of. As Darra Goldstein reveals, the woman who works at the meat shop reserves the fresh minced beef for her friend. In exchange, this chum at the dairy keeps back a lump of good butter. The blat system, fully exploited to the Bolshoi, or a new car. But at its most common level, it produces for Russians the sort of food stuffs that only make their appearances under the counter, not over it.

home is as varied and immense as the regions that make up the Russian sub-continent. Generally speaking, the food is robust rather than subtle — like most North European fare. Darra Goldstein, granddaughter of a Russian emigre and one time student at Leningrad University, has put together a very catholic choice of dishes. As a guide for a US Department of Agriculture travelling show, she toured much of the USSR. Even if you never interpret any of the recipes, the essays that precede each group of recipes give as good a picture of domestic Russia as can be had outside the old Russian

- classics. For armchair travellers, here — in principle — Chicken Satsivi (serves eight): 1 small chicken (2½-3 lbs) 1 bayleaf 1 large carrot 2 sprigs parsley 3½ pints (1 litre) cold water salt to taste 4 tablespoons chicken fat butter 3 large onions 10 small whole heads garlic 4oz (120 gr) walnuts 2 tablespoons coriander seed cayenne to taste 1 teaspoon ground black pepper ¼ teaspoon cinnamon 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill 2 teaspoons vinegar

Place chicken, bay leaf, carrot, parsley sprigs, water and salt to taste in a large stock pot. Bring to the boil, skimming any froth that rises to the surface. Simmer, covered, for 1 hour; then remove the chicken to a large sieve and let it drain. Reserve the broth, measuring out 1½ pints (650 ml). Preheat oven to 310°C/425°F/gas 7. Place the chicken on a baking sheet and roast until skin is glazed. Set aside to cool, then bone and separate the meat into good-sized chunks. In a large frying pan melt 4 tablespoons butter — chop the onions and sauté in fat until soft and transparent. Meanwhile peel the garlic and grind in a mincer or mangle. Grind the walnuts. Finely crush the coriander seed. When the onions are ready, add the garlic, nuts and coriander then stir in the remaining spices and herbs. Stir in the vinegar and blend well. In a steady stream, add the reserved chicken broth. Simmer the mixture for 10 minutes then add the chicken pieces. Simmer 5 minutes. Remove the satsivi from the heat and transfer to a serving dish. Chill well before serving. Garnish with minced fresh coriander.

Erik is a painter turned chef, and the result is cuisine nouvelle

GOOD FOOD GUIDE



BARFORD St is one of those villages where strangers cannot buy newspapers because no extras are ordered. It is just far enough west of Salisbury on the A30 that on a dark night you will be ready to conclude that the last clutch of unignited buildings must have been it. Then it appears. Mitchell is in the pink corner building at the bottom of the hill on the kind of crossroads they write pop songs about.

For the last two and a half years Erik Michel and his wife Karen, and her mother Joan (hers is the b and b,

theirs the restaurant) have been quietly going about their business. Their business is cuisine nouvelle. So it says on the calling card.

Erik is a painter turned chef and has a canny eye for the visual which does not mean you get one carrot on a pretty plate but platefuls covered with Miro-esque designs which you can promptly eat... main course originals about £7. But he does not lose sight of the prime object of food; that it should be eaten. His dishes look more attractive than most.

Cooking is a performing art and does not have the aspirations of the drama itself. The cook is the craftsman. But Mr Mitchell has allied his craft so closely to the visual arts that an illusion is created. His is nouvelle cuisine in that it is decorative and that the sauce appears under the centrepiece.

His fillet of the freshest turbot comes with a sauce of Meaux mustard and sitting on top of it by way of garnish (although they are too plump for garnishes), are a pair of intertwined king prawns. On a separate side plate are heaped half a dozen vegetables with the visual impact of a laden market stall.

The eggs from the turbot, silvery salty beads that rival caviar as a delicacy, show how fresh this fish was. They decorate the starter of pike quenelles in a lobster sauce. Across the table, another starter of pheasant mousse in a dome of paper-thin pastry sits in a dark madeira glaze and for colour two spears of chicory are crossed and the tiny flecks of green on them are not the usual watercress or parsley or cucumber but the crumbly heads of broccoli.

Perhaps a more typical mark of the cooking is the bones and rolled widgeon with redcurrants roasted and served in a rich demi-glace of an intensity found only in the better restaurants, with the legs served on a side plate filled with various small salad leaves, more redcurrants, and a dressing of walnut oil. Or else the three happinesses for sweet — a star-shaped mousse, a chocolate square mousse filled with a crescent of Grand Marnier butter, and a praline ice on top of a coconut biscuit and the plate liberally scattered with fruits for effect. The wine list is short but well chosen, bottle for bottle to judge by the '83 Muscadet and also a Chateau Millet '76 that needs and gets a gentle warming before serving. Draw a veil over the cheeses for a moment, and let us say that such things happen in small restaurants that

do not get the kind of custom they need and let us say that on other evenings there has been served boned skate with a cream sauce with sea urchins, poached brill with crawfish and asparagus and ocras à la neige with strawberries. The bill will be less than £20 each or under £15 if you stay with the set menu... and that's including half a bottle of wine. Michel's, Barford St Martin, Wilts. Tel. Salisbury (0722) 742240. All correspondence about restaurants to the Good Food Guide, Freeport, 14 Buckingham Street, London WC2. We are currently drawing up short lists for the 1986 Guide and would be interested to have suggestions for places that might be included. © Consumers Association 1985. Drew Smith

Honest bottle

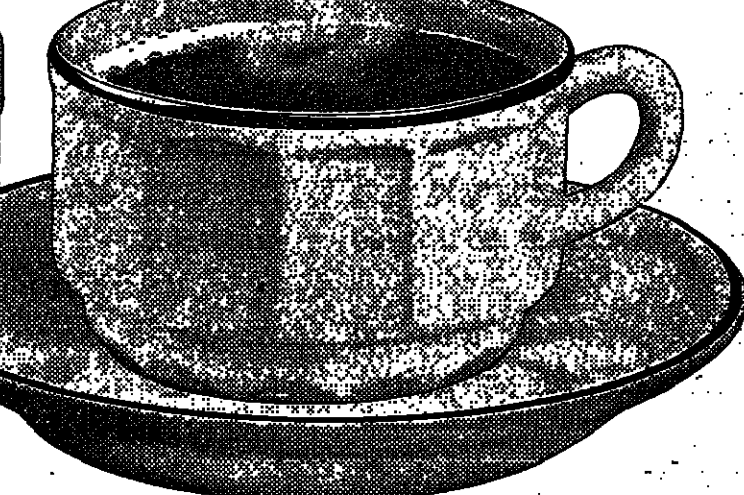


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Christopher Driver Food and wine editor

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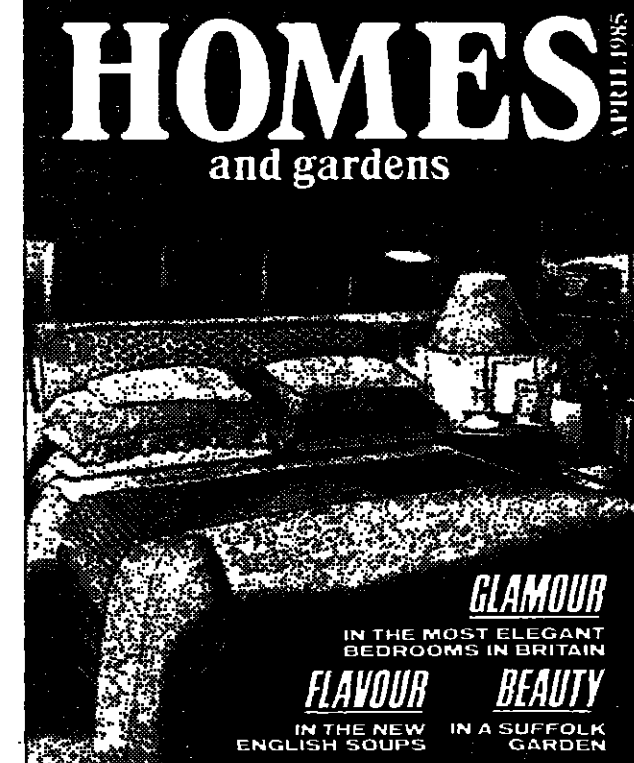
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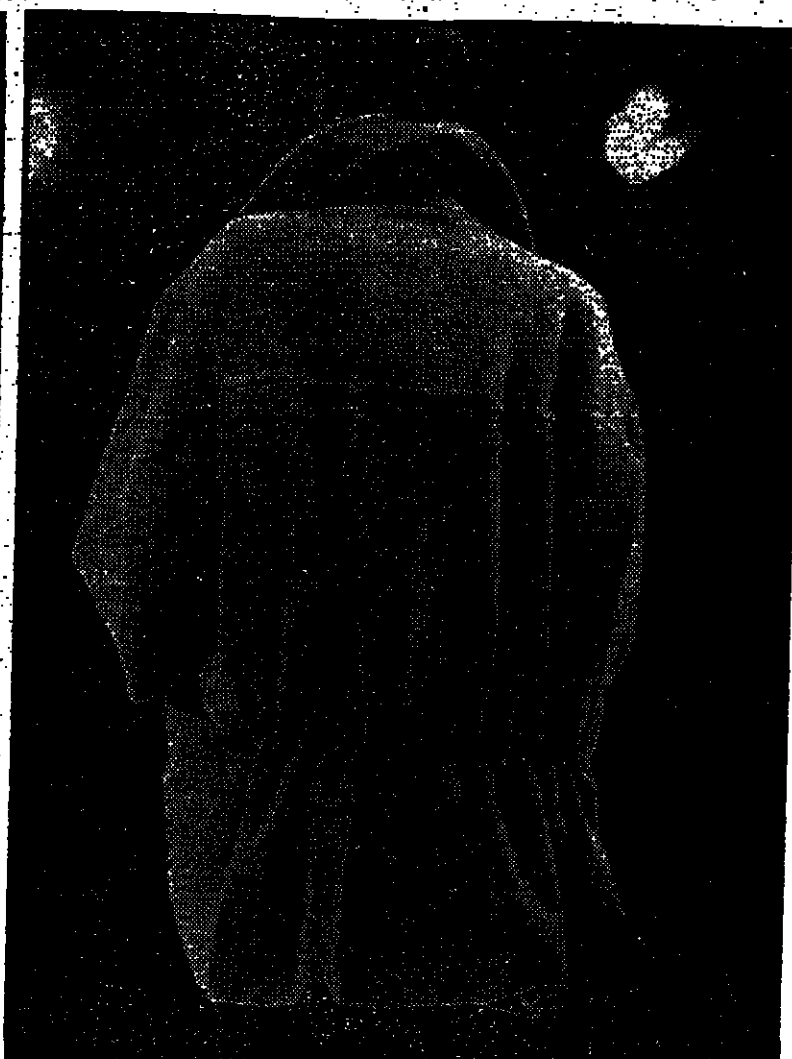
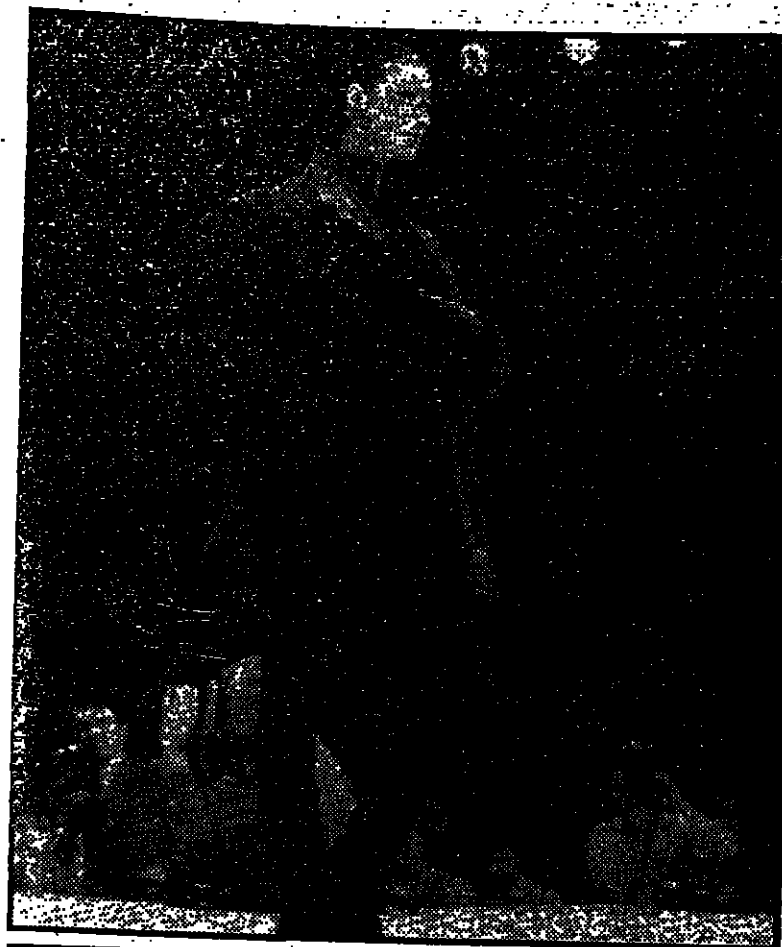
April issue

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MAGAZINE

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FROM LEFT, CLOCKWISE: ARMANI, VERSACE, FERRE, ARMANI

Italy's daywear is the world's best. One of its top designer's eveningwear held even the most hard-bitten of his audience spellbound. Brenda Polan reports from the Milan extravaganza. Pictures by Frank Martin

Some enchanted eveningwear

THERE'S an old showbiz adage which fashion designers, if they crave standing ovations, bravos and suchlike signals of approval, would be advised to take to heart. Leave 'em laughing, is how it goes. Or, it matters not if the major part of the show is mundane, even mediocre, if the last act has them rolling in the aisles and giggling towards the exits, happy memories and a wish to return for more of the same firmly established.

Giorgio Armani proved this week in Milan that he knows all about leaving 'em laughing. True, a clique of glitterati, movie stars and socialites, in the audience, contributed to the hysteria which insisted not only on one prolonged blushing bow from the designer but on two encores as well—a unique phenomenon at a ready-to-wear show. However, it must be reported that the less partisan in the crowded auditorium, the fashion press and the hard-nosed buyers from around the world, were also swept along on the flood of euphoria created by, of all things, Armani's eveningwear.

Italy produces the most beautiful daywear in the world. It tends to eschew violent swings in fashion but

has developed instead a style of dress which combines, as none other does, a comfortable, easy-to-wear classicism with sensuousness and imagination. It is not theatrical in the way that most French daywear is, nor, it must be said, does it offer the wit and excitement which is to be found in the work of English designers. But it is the way most women, once exposed to it, would choose to dress.

But that is the daywear. After six most Italian designers succumb to strange uncertainties. They either understate the case by repeating their daywear designs in slightly more luxurious fabrics or they overstate it, extravagantly and descend to levels of vulgarity which leave companies like our own Swanky Modes who revel, tongue in cheek, in kitsch excess, gasping and outdone.

Spare a charitable thought for the backs who are even now gathering for the London collections, bleary-eyed and sunken-faced, and you will see a more body-conscious mood in general was emphatic, there was no dogmatic laying down of the line and plenty of choice. The colours were the sombre, murky ones the Italians so love: black, grey, brown, beige, caramel and cinnamon, often in splendid

outside Milan's huge fashion show auditoria, journalists, particularly the English-speaking contingent, would bemoan the grossness of the glitter, uncombed by reassurances from a London buyer (who must, of course, remain anonymous), that they are always snapped up by the high-class hookers among her customers. But all we really needed to do was flick back the pages of our notebooks. Fashion shows are structured chronologically through the day to find the sketches, scrappy with enthusiasm and haste to draw the next one before the model reaches the end of the runway and disappears, and the scribbled, superlatives, asterisks of approval and delighted underlinings.

For, as ever, the Italians had opted for the development of a look rather than a headline-hungry volte-face and, although the move towards a more semi-fitted, less voluminous and fluid silhouette and towards a more body-conscious mood in general was emphatic, there was no dogmatic laying down of the line and plenty of choice. The colours were the sombre, murky ones the Italians so love: black, grey, brown, beige, caramel and cinnamon, often in splendid

weedy mixtures. But for those who like to outface winter in bright colours, there was a good deal of scarlet, some violet and emerald, a splash or two of difficult yellow and cobalt blue plus some dark, rich-toned floral and paisley prints usually worn with layered tweeds, checks and stripes. Although most winter coats are still, as they should be, very big, very long and cut with deep armholes to accommodate whatever is worn underneath and most top Italian designers are still producing the wonderful roomy unstructured jackets which they cut so well, all have placed new emphasis on the waist. Jackets are shaped into the waist and some are belted.

The most shapely, by Gianfranco Ferré, Gianni Versace and Luciano Soprani, are body-skimming and seamed and tucked, often with sunny type tucks radiating outwards from the area of the navel to emphasise the body's natural curves. Soprani also did full-skirted riding jackets in city black or country plaid and Keith Varty at Byblos gave his shapely jackets a hint of shirt-tail.

There were, on balance, more trousers than skirts on

the Milanese runways of which most were either jersey ski-pants tucked into flat, thick-soled boots or tweed, flannel or velvet trousers cut narrow and tapering just like a ski-pant and finished with a turn-up. But also on offer were classic straight-legged grey flannel trousers with waistline pleats, worn, for the first time for many a long season, with high-heeled court shoes as well as flat brogues or lace-ups.

There were also a few experimental flared trousers, notably by Gianfranco Ferré, and voluminous grey flannel bags, very successfully teamed with hacking jackets and jockey caps by Luciano Soprani for his collection for Basile. At Sportmax where the designers tend to remain anonymous but where Royal College of Art star graduate, Eric Bremner, is working, a very youthful British-looking collection included some dashing dungarees, jodhpurs, sometimes narrowed down, had a small part in most collections.

Skirts were mostly narrow and short. Armani, true to the spare, minimalist style he has spent the last few seasons paring and perfecting, had one of the shortest, well above the knee and it

looked spiritedly young, care-free and purposeful teamed with his short, semi-fitted jacket, a garment almost without detail but of breathtaking presence, capable of thrilling by its purity and what it implies about Armani's mastery of his medium.

Armani, however, is not a curves man. His belts, although they rest on the waist, are narrow and loosely fastened. His padded shoulders have a sharp, hard edge to them. His trousers are straight-legged, his shoes are still mostly flat, his fabrics predominately those we used to think of, before androgynous dressing had its latest fling, as traditionally menswear fabrics. And he tends, as he has done for several seasons, towards neutral shades—beige, grey, black, mushroom, cream and white.

The eveningwear, which elicited from this none-too-excitable reporter the comment that it corresponded to the Platonic ideal of such garments, consisted of totally simple, austere high-necked, long-sleeved dresses in Prince of Wales check, fairscale sequins. There were blazers and simple round-neck tops in the fabric, too, teamed with starkly cut

black velvet trousers or narrow skirts.

There was, actually, one other perfect evening dress to be seen in Milan: Gianfranco Ferré's slender, uncinching, long-sleeved pillar of black cashmere. Ferré, while not exactly a curves man, loves volume and drape, every and cunning little fiddly bits. This collection was unusually strict and clean-lined, his superb big coats worn over indoor clothes which were narrow and slender. He had done several versions of the popular long tunic, sometimes shirt-tailed, over the short, tight skirt; the most enthusiastically received of all was grey flannel, the long top collarless or with a neat military collar and sometimes sporting button-down patch pockets.

Curves, real ones, we got from Karl Lagerfeld's collection for Fendi with a tightly belted Dr Zhivago opulence and from Italy's celebrator of the simious, Gianni Versace. His wide shoulders were generously rounded, his jackets and coats were uncinching homages to the circle. Beneath them, providing balance and a superb harmony of proportion, he puts straight skirts in a choice of lengths from very short to the shin, tulip-shaped

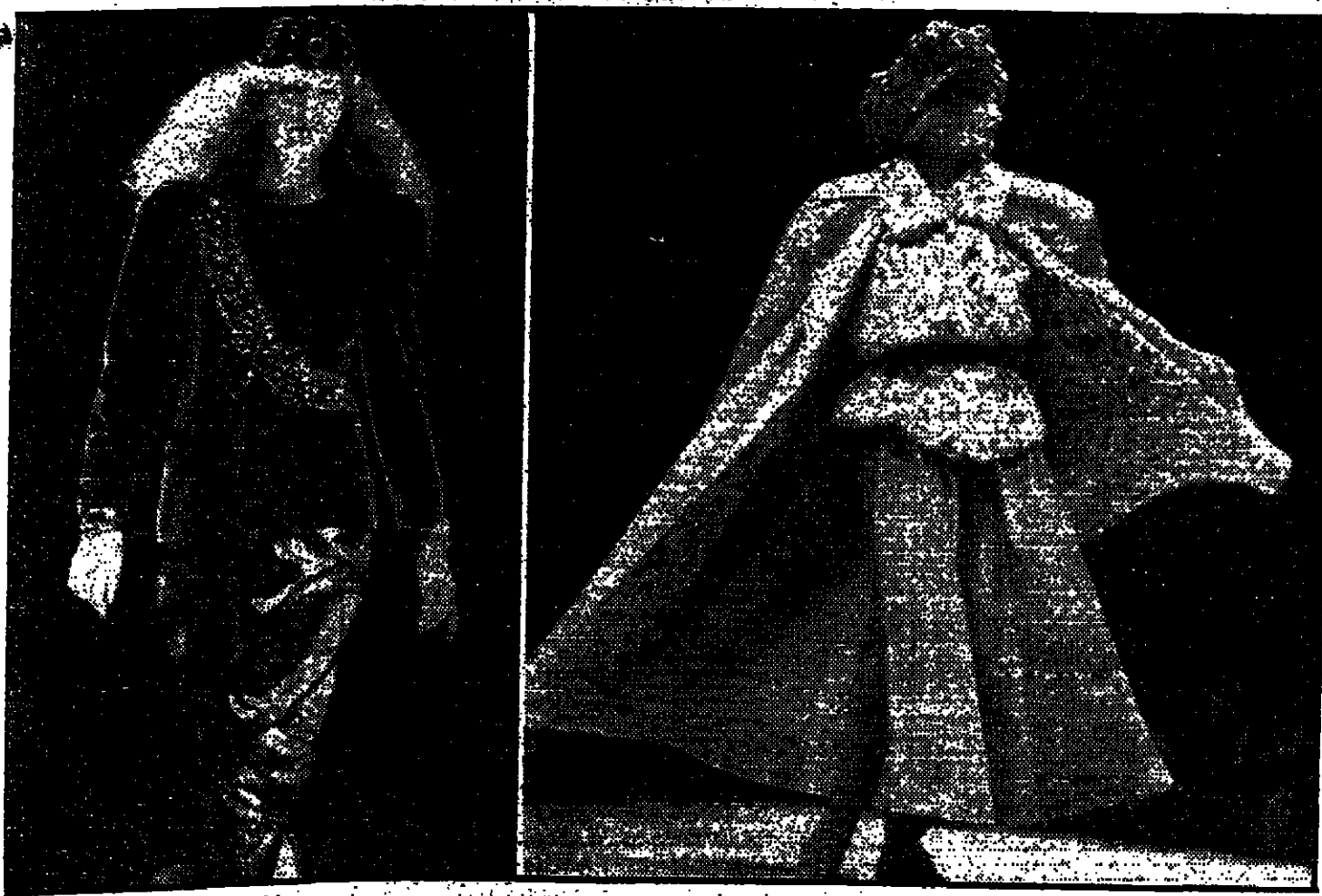
wrap-arounds or emphatically curvaceous skirts gathered into the waistband and tapered to the hem.

For those who stubbornly refuse to reveal their calves he has done beautiful print skirts, cosy on the hip and flaring beneath. Beneath his dark sheepskins he has put tailored, deep-belted gaberdine firing suits in dark tones of red, blue and emerald.

Mariuccia Mandelli at Krizia, rarely anything but body-conscious, puts cream angora, two-pieces, long sweater over short skirt, beneath her beautiful pale sheepskins. This season's addition to the Krizia zoo is a fox and his pelt was reflected in the rich chestnuts, tans and creams which she favoured.

Her lean brown and tan deeply ribbed knitted tunic and skirt outfits and her simple easy tweed cardigan jacket summed up the strength of Milan's designers. They can make clothes which are at once casually sporty, coolly relaxed and sexy in a very classy way. They may forget to leave their audience laughing but the formula has enabled them to giggle all the way to the bank.

FROM LEFT: KRIZIA, FENDI, VERSACE, SOPRANI



Laugh? I nearly cried

Hugh Hebert tackles the BBC over its two-faced attitude towards the television critic

AS THE BBC publicity told it, Newtime (BBC2) was a comedy about a fictional news and current affairs programme where a new whiz-kid producer is installed to raise the ratings, or else. Sounds familiar? Maybe it should—it was written by Susannah Greenberg and John Wilkinson, who were in BBC news and current affairs, including the fiasco of Sixty Minutes, the hastily-replaced replacement for Nationwide. And what was Newtime like? Right now, I can only say, "You tell me," because the BBC refused to let me see a preview.

Time was when the critic sat in front of the set at home, pen poised, notebook, wick, munching a notebook.

before a quick dash to dictate the review of the night's events. And it still happens for live television occasions. But for years most programmes have been recorded on film or tape, so most criticism has been based on previews of the shows.

That is the only way you can get reviews of late programmes to all the readers next morning, as opposed to just reaching readers of the late editions. And the whole point of daily television criticism is that it's about programmes every reader has had the chance to share the night before.

Which is why the BBC organises a series of official previews every week. Now, of course, this guides critics

towards programmes the BBC wants reviewed. But usually a phone call is enough to arrange a special preview. And a call to any ITV company or Channel 4 will usually have them leaping to provide a preview or a cassette. Even some BBC producers will oblige with a loaned cassette, but they tend to slip it to you like a dirty postcard, muttering, "Don't say where you got it."

Everyone in the business, in other words, seems to think it's a good idea for critics to review their programmes next morning, if only because after that, with the huge volume of television rolling over us each day, its chances of any

review in the dailies diminishes hugely. Everyone, that is, except the BBC comedy department, with whom critics like Nancy Banks-Smith have fought a running battle for years on just this point. She recently had a letter inviting her to preview Carla Lane's new series, *I Woke Up One Morning*, and the letter ended: "This brief description of the series is to point out that you should not view it as a situation comedy, but as a comedy. It is written as comedy." Decoded, this means, "We'll let you see it as long as you don't laugh. Because if you laugh, it's comedy, and we don't preview comedy."

Now there is a bizarre new twist to this stupid situation.

Gareth Gwenlan, who has been head of comedy at the BBC for about a year, is to his credit making some changes. He was a producer before he took the captain's seat, and gave you series like *To the Manor Born* and *Reginald Perrin*. He says that in the past 10 days, they have decided that they will allow previews of new comedy series.

But only for the people who write the brief notes about the programmes that are to be shown in the day and the week ahead—where the convention is that you give a brief outline to whet the appetite, and some slight critical gloss. And Gwenlan says they are even considering extending the previews

to critics as well—but not yet. Decoded from Beespeak, this means: "We will help you to say something nice in advance that might increase our audience; but we won't help you give a full review the morning after because you might, ungratefully, turn round and slam our new series into the dust."

But none of this applies to a one-off comedy play like *Newtime*, so why wouldn't Mr Gwenlan show it to us? Well, he doesn't see any point. *Newtime*, he tells me, is "unique," and its uniqueness lies in the fact that it is a pilot for a series that will never now be made. And— you guessed — we don't show pilots, except

when they become No 1. of the series. So if it wasn't good enough to become a series, and they don't show pilots, why are they showing it at all? Could it be, you muse, that if a send-up of a programme about a fictional BBC news programme were scrapped, someone would cry, "Suppression?" Better to slip it out in a late-night slot.

"Had it been a better, more accurate send-up, a satire, we'd be doing it as a series," says Gwenlan. You bet I hope you saw this modest, "unique" little programme. Maybe it was uniquely bad — you tell me. Because at this particular moment, the BBC won't let me tell you.

THEATRE UPSTAIRS

Michael Billington

Deadlines

THERE are too few plays about the media. So, on grounds of rarity alone, I welcome Stephen Wakelam's *Deadlines* at the Theatre Upstairs. It raises almost too many questions about journalistic ethics and comes to a questionable conclusion. But like all Joint Stock Productions, it has the smell of something carefully researched and much-pondered rather than fancifully tossed-off.

It is set at the time of the Party Conferences last autumn and it shows how a slightly fuzzy story about the suicide of a boy from a Yorkshire mining-family is elevated into a national event. At the outset we see a Radio Sheffield woman, Sheila, interviewing the dead lad's sister and learning that he left a suicide-note asking "What future is there now there's no work?"

Scenting both a good story and a chance for a self-aggrandisement, the reporter feeds the item to *Newstime* only to learn that she has barely scratched at the truth. A pit-manager goes on to tell to proclaim the dead boy's mate that the suicide may have been dictated as much by a bid for fame as by social protest.

Mr Wakelam has a good eye for the way a news-story gathers momentum and for the manner in which media-folk (in TV especially) often become encased in their own professionalism: there is a blithely accurate recreation of a scene in a studio-gallery during transmission which captures exactly the right tone of fretful banter. But Mr Wakelam is not simply making the crude point that media-people feed off tragedy. He is suggesting that truth is elusive and that the local digger is more likely to find it than the hit-and-run folk from Fleet Street and Lime Grove. That may be true, except that I couldn't believe that only the local man would have the nous to interview the dead boy's best friend.

But, though the play is entertaining and full of plausible detail, it leads to a highly debatable point. The key confrontation is between the Radio Sheffield reporter and the suicide's brother who is a striking-miner. The

latter argues, seemingly with Mr Wakelam's approval, that it is not enough for journalists to be apologetic observers: they should declare their opinions and prejudices and visibly take sides. But the curse of modern journalism is the way opinion is often presented as fact and the very reporting of the coal-dispute has exemplified this. Mr Wakelam, by implication, wants journalists to crusade: what he overlooks is that loaded presentation of facts is in the end a disservice to truth.

But it is good to find the theatre (in the wake of the Ploughman's Lunch) grappling with the whole issue of the journalistic process. And Simon Curtis's fast-moving production gets the atmosphere right, from the plastic cup world of local radio to the gossip-filled world of the Party Conference.

A cast of six also play multiple roles with Kathryn Pogson as the careerist radio reporter, Paul Jesson as the unambitious Sheffield Star worthy and Shirin Taylor as the dead boy's sister hitting the right note. I was less persuaded by Paul Mooney's high-camp Express diarist but then that is a world few dramatic writers enter. But I am delighted that the theatre (with the National's *Pravda* yet to come) is beginning to take a hard look at the way news is managed in Britain.

SADLER'S WELLS

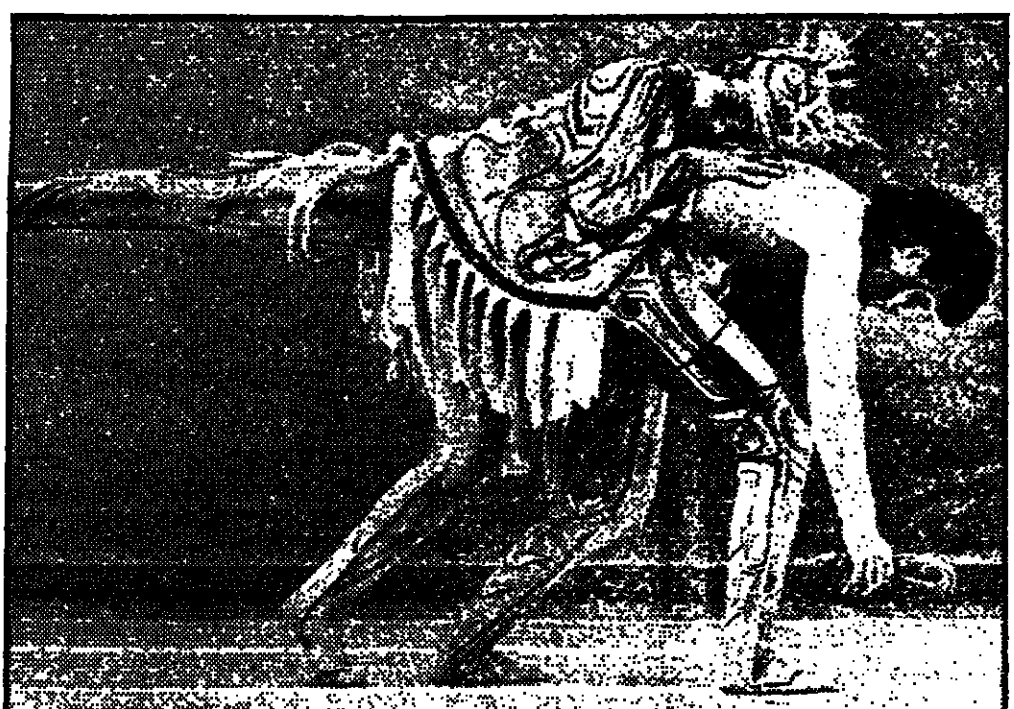
Alastair Macaulay

Ballet Rambert

TWO choreographers being all too characteristic and one choreographer being oddly uncharacteristic produce an uneasy triple bill to open Ballet Rambert's three-week London season. Sergeant Early's *Dream* is the audience's darling of the three, but to me it's just another Christopher Bruce work. Death and the Maiden, first made for London Contemporary Dance Theatre in 1980, is only yet another of Robert North's.

The evening's surprise comes from Richard Alston. His new *Mythologies* is very determined to break any idea we might have of an Alston mould.

The story is truly mythic and fairly impenetrable even to those in the programme. It had been the premise of the Nigel Osborne score, but it doesn't turn well with that score into



Robert North, Mark Baldwin in Ballet Rambert's *Mythologies*: picture by Douglas Jeffery

stage realisation. Candida Cook's costumes are too cartoon-folklore, unlike Peter Mumford's seriously mystic set. Alston is plainly keen—as in last year's *Wildlife*, not yet seen in London—to break away from the ballet vocab, that's marked much of his recent work.

Any phrase at all in Sergeant Early's *Dream* shows you that Christopher Bruce is a real choreographer. Rhythmic, contoured, varied, all of them. But the phrases collect and what emerges is less choreography than ritual. The invention within each short section outlives its welcome. And, comic or sad by turns, each section is suborned by the sense that Things Have Always Been So. Some latterday Druids drone some rather naïf folk songs at the back of the stage. The language is half-folk and half-Graham and more audience-conscious than usual for Bruce. A tragic duet with Diane Walker stands out, suddenly real.

Death and the Maiden is to two movements of Schubert's string quartet. The group dances are music visualisation clichés, thrashing vaguely from one half-profile to another. The duets display North's usual view that being male and female is intolerably burdensome suddenly to the characters. As often Robert North casts himself in the leading role. But I don't envy him. This time he is Death. When Death comes, may it be less waffle-prone than this choreography.

RFH

Edward Seckerson

Berlin SSO

COMPARISONS are, I suppose, inevitable. But whether East or West of the wall, it must be hard on Berlin's "other" orchestras living and working as they do in the shadow of the great Philharmonic. Not that the East's distinguished old Staatskapelle — nosing into London only weeks before Karajan's celebrated band — invites too many apologies.

This venerable ensemble exudes tradition and nobility from every desk with its deep mahogany cast in the strings, its nutty well-developed woodwinds. There is very definitely a taste of old Europe authenticity about it, and very welcome it is.

Substituting for an indisposed Otmar Suitner, Weller should by rights have been in his element stepping into a programme so perfectly tailored to his Viennese grass-roots: namely Mozart and Mahler. As one who spent years in the coveted leader's seat of the Vienna Philharmonic, he should, after all, know a thing or two, for instance, about engendering intimacy and elegance in Mozart. Or so one would have hoped. Alas, this account of Symphony No. 38 yielded nothing to the inherent ebb and flow, the Viennese fireside warmth, the natural vitality of this music.

At least Mahler's Fifth Symphony brought us, rather than the rather over-the-top story beyond the notes, at least Weller acted here upon the earthy exuberant if not

the stark Mahlerian contrasts of this music. The opening was disconcerting: an arthritic first trumpet and those characteristic wailing wide vibrato horns. The chill, the awe of Mahler's blackest funeral oration was nowhere.

ALBANY EMPIRE

Nicholas de Jongh

Week In, Week Out

ALTHOUGH the Greater London Enterprise Board sweeps a dejected group of redundant clothing factory workers to productive life in *The Ickle's Week In Week Out*, his play is far from being a mere propaganda piece in aid of the doomed GLC.

It is true that the board is summoned up as a panacea, and the premises of the bankrupt factory are absurdly given over to the distinct individual talents into an artistic unity that leaves no irritating imbalance or threat to the necessary usefulness of ensemble.

Above all, the choreography is theatrical and, in rivers notably descriptive. In *River of Change* and *Moon Sisters* a messier, liquid affinity is achieved. Apart from Christopher Bannerman, the dancers—and in some cases choreographers—are Celia Hulton and Jayne Lee, both from London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Neville Campbell, and Judy Harris. They all have established reputations; they look good, and their tight discipline and evident versatility lead one to hope that *Moves Afoot* has genuine future.

Seldom in small dance groups like this are arms so expressive: the limbs are forever weaving their patterns. But am I alone in detecting whatever the subject—a rather too consciously pre-determined style? Maybe the way the programme is composed over-

emphasises it. This is, however, in every sense a worthwhile and auspicious start, helped by some excellent design and lighting.

BASS CLEF

John Fordham

Bobby Watson

THE DEMEANOUR of saxophone players, who have dominated jazz since the 1930s, is a many splendoured thing. Some are cool and diffident, holding the instrument as if examining a Ming vase. Some swing it as if it were a spring machine. Some proudly demonstrate their dexterity to it. And a few, notably Sonny Rollins and now the brilliant ex-ART Blakely altoist Bobby Watson, have an engaging tendency to rhapsodise ingeniously while staring straight at the punters with raised eyebrows as if to say, "Now where the hell is all this coming from?"

Watson is a young man but a player of the old school, a celebrator of past glories as Wynton Marsalis is — he shared Blakely's front line with Marsalis in his days with Jazz Messengers. But although Watson's music is infused with the quicksilver lyricism of Charlie Parker, he is many leagues away from the standard bebop remould. His tone is very pure and clean, and his line has a fiery and imperious passion to them, even when their construction seems too complex and intricate to sound anything but algebraic.

At the Bass Clef on Wednesday, Watson was playing the first gig of a nationwide tour, which will take in a Camden Jazz Week performance on March 22. He is appearing with a British group featuring the trumpeter Guy Barker who — on both the modesty of his on-stage conduct and the unexpected intensity of his playing — strongly brings to mind a young Kenny Wheeler.

The band played a repertoire of distinctly Messengerial pieces of jazz, pop, latin tunes and ballads. Orange Blossom, opening as a piece of pure film noir music, accelerated through an increasingly animated trumpet solo by Barker, which ended in little prodding phrases that Watson gleefully took up and unravelled into a series of incandescent, comet-like swoops. Andy Cleynert played a beautiful bass solo on the same theme, mostly in the deepest register and with scintillating slowness, full of throaty slurs.

And on the bouncy, mid-tempo *Messengers* tune, *Time Will Tell*, Barker demonstrated his determination to keep up with the leader while playing a blistering solo, veering wildly from shouts to whispers and swinging fiercely. He never loosened up enough to unbutton his jacket for all that.

Some of these reviews appeared in later editions yesterday.

BRISTOL

David Foot

Moves Afoot

MOVES AFOOT, a new Bristol-based dance initiative directed by Christopher Bannerman, on sabbatical from London Contemporary Dance Theatre, has opened this week at the Arncliffe as a prelude to a national tour.

The five performers have rather more than technical aplomb. They have that elusive ability of transferring distinct individual talents into an artistic unity that leaves no irritating imbalance or threat to the necessary usefulness of ensemble.

Above all, the choreography is theatrical and, in rivers notably descriptive. In *River of Change* and *Moon Sisters* a messier, liquid affinity is achieved. Apart from Christopher Bannerman, the dancers—and in some cases choreographers—are Celia Hulton and Jayne Lee, both from London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Neville Campbell, and Judy Harris. They all have established reputations; they look good, and their tight discipline and evident versatility lead one to hope that *Moves Afoot* has genuine future.

Seldom in small dance groups like this are arms so expressive: the limbs are forever weaving their patterns. But am I alone in detecting whatever the subject—a rather too consciously pre-determined style? Maybe the way the programme is composed over-

Val Arnold-Forster reviews radio plays

Band of hope

HERE'S a copybook batch for the serious drama students: three plays that could only be for the ear alone. *Two Radio 3 plays*, King Canute (Sunday) and *Inheritance* (Wednesday) and *More Out Than In* (to be heard tomorrow evening and Sunday on World Service) all are models of imaginative flexibility, each of them moving with wit and some tenderness, through the convolutions of the mind, from private thought back and forth into dialogue. All of them were written by skilful playwrights, offering well-taken opportunities for intelligent playing and inventive production.

Why, therefore, does the grumpy query of a correspondent spring so easily to my mind: "Why do so many of the most praised radio plays consist of the ramblings of old barn-pots?"

Take King Canute. There's no doubt that he hero, Harold, out of work and a keen trombonist member of the defunct Brass Band, is a barn-pot — at least as far as the police, the psychiatrist, the local mental hospital, and the helicopter crew who fish him off the tidal rocks at Bognor sands are concerned.

His ever-loving wife (a deliciously warm-hearted performance by Judith Barker) thinks otherwise; and of course, as any connoisseur of Radio 3's barn-pot rambling, could tell, it is our hero, replete with home-spun perceptions of the state of the world, who is sane. It is the rest of the world — or rather the authorities — that is out of step, and Harold, in latter-day Canute, ends up rescued by the newly-resurrected brass band, set fair to "swing with the tide."

There is a nice drop of mordant North Country humour, a style particularly cherished by radio, with a plot that rattles convincingly from beach to hospital ward, from near-drowning in the sea, to ecstasy in the bedroom.

The author Barry Collins, whose previous works for radio have been two lengthy and serious monologues, manages to put a way of presenting sex on the air in a way that is both explicit and unembarrassing for the listener — a useful achievement that has defeated many a playwright before him. And the producer Alfred Bradley produces all the goings-on with witty performances from the trombonist Derek Southcott and the Besses' O' Th' Barn Band, who provided not just background music, but real commentaries on the text.

The hero of King Canute escapes from the clutches of the authorities under the guise of going into "community care." More Out Than In, by Bernard Kops and produced by Gordon House, is an ominous study of what community care can only too easily mean.

A group of former mental patients are put on the care of a Dickensian landlady, her husband and a treacherous cleric: the adventures of the group are both distressing and, in their way, almost picaresque. In *Inheritance*, by Bernard Kops and produced by Gordon House, is an ominous study of what community care can only too easily mean.

The old farmer in *Inheritance* is anything but mad, though he is undoubtedly rambling and given to rquent communication with the dead — not that much of a sign of abnormal behaviour in radio plays. Brian chats with the dear departed as commonplace. The farmer is failing, unable to work his land without help, and worried about who will succeed him. His anxieties rest with his feeling of responsibility not only to his own sons, but to the past generations of farmers and their families who have lived and worked in his place. It takes a deft hand to weld these complex threads of memory and imagination into a believable whole, but then author Don Haworth is a master of radio, and the ponderings of the old man create a vision of a history alive with the ambitions and predictions of the past. The flashback fits into the dreamlike quality of Richard Wortley's production, and, avoiding the easy option of a sad and unfinished ending, the play comes to a satisfying circle as a farmer finds a way of handing on his care for his care, while fulfilling an old prophecy.

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Jon Vickers (Picture by Frank Martin) and, right, in one of his great roles, Peter Grimes (Picture by Douglas Jeffery).

Jon Vickers uses his phenomenal voice to illuminate operatic roles profoundly and controversially, as Tom Sutcliffe explains

A voice in the wilderness

HOW CAN a singer be controversial? Good or bad, more or less skilled, more or less loud, beautiful, thrilling, on the other hand, suggests something more than the notes and Jon Vickers is one of the very few singers in the world to deserve the accolade.

If he is controversial, it does not affect his success or status as one of the tiny handful of top international opera stars. Since making his Covent Garden debut 30 years ago, he has regularly confined himself to an annual tally of 50 to 55 performances all told. His voice at 58 has aged a bit, and as he puts it "taken on a patina", but it sounds in good enough shape to go on for another decade on the same careful, always well-rehearsed programme. He's considering adding yet another famous role to his repertoire, and may take the lead in the world premiere of a brand new opera.

What's controversial and not equally welcome to all his audience is the portentous character of his music, the relentless determination to confront listeners with the meaning of the dramas that he depicts whether on stage or in the concert hall. He has the advantage of a hugely powerful, noble, memorable voice, but his prophetic, oracular calls to attention can be profoundly uncomfortable for those who have ears to hear.

He can bring more intention and intensity to a single word than any singer I have ever heard. His "Amfortas, die Wunde" at the heart of his 1968 Covent Garden Parsifal (Kemp conducting) swelled like a watershed and became the overwhelming moral fulcrum of the entire work. His "Gott" at the start of Florestan's great aria combines the hope and despair of all guileless prisoners. Other tenors merely go through the heroic motions. Vickers creates a growing statement in a musical paragraph, explores the extension of a musical line as the great interpretative conductors do.

After our interview in his dressing-room at the Royal Opera (he's almost finished the run of Handel's Samson there) he got back on the phone to me twice to make quite sure I hadn't misunderstood him. First, "When I said Samson had lost faith, I

didn't mean it just in the religious sense, but in the sense that he had been false to what he stood for."

Second, a few days later, "I just wanted to make sure you didn't think I was disparaging technique. Of course there has to be technique, but it is not there for its own sake. The technique a singer has is not for display but to serve the meaning, to fulfil the purpose of the music."

Vickers is not a born again Christian. In fact he dislikes the name. Gundry, bible-thumping moral majority image that he sometimes gets. But he has never for a moment lost the Christian commitment of his Presbyterian background in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan where he was the sixth of a headmaster's eight children. It was a poor man's Trapp family.

The school background still comes out. Vickers enlarged on why he refused to sing Tamnhauser. He believes the work is Wagner's most full frontal assault on Christianity, the little role a blackguard "despicable, arrogant and amoral".

Vickers takes his stand on "humility before the eternal and the acceptance of justification by faith." He's a great Wagnerian singer, yet he has no doubt of Wagner's evil purposes. He traces a line of corrupt influence from Voltaire and Rousseau through Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Marx to "the greatest evil influence of all that has wreaked damage in our civilisation like no other figure—Sigmund Freud. A controversial opinion, but I have the support of one of the very great minds of this century—Mr Hayek."

Vickers's early entrepreneurial instinct led him to handle the agency for Fleischman's Yeastcakes at only 13, and sextuple his volume of business in four years. In his late teens Standard Brands wanted him to open their new outlet in Cuba. He really wanted to go through medical school.

He never had the wildest influence of all that has wreaked damage in our civilisation like no other figure—Sigmund Freud. A controversial opinion, but I have the support of one of the very great minds of this century—Mr Hayek."

sang Comfort Ye and Every Valley from Messiah — "no mean feat for a 20-year-old". After two years his teacher told him the voice would probably not even be mature at 30, but was "not a run of the mill voice" and handled carefully and not pushed beyond its capacity ought to be showing its true potential by then, when — if it didn't work — he would still be young enough to return to commerce. It meant seven years study.

"It's one of the tragedies today that youngsters study for maybe two years and think they're qualified for the Met or Covent Garden. I know of a Canadian tenor who came here with only two operas in his repertoire. When I set foot on this stage, I had 30, 35 cantatas and oratorios and 22 operatic roles in my repertoire."

Vickers fiercely condemns the current school of vocalism "that doesn't teach the necessity of colour." He says he's heard an Italian Radames sing "Un treno vicino al sole", because he didn't want to sing the o vowel of "trono" in the passage. "Now there's a big difference between a throne and a train near the sun. My teacher used to say if you can't pronounce the word there's something wrong with your technique."

Professional life began for him, Vickers says, when he woke up one day "to discover I really did not particularly enjoy singing." It had become a duty, something that every artist has to recognise. Vickers had graduated from the valley of disillusionment (his phrase) with his integrity and idealism intact but with his naïveté gone.

He defests the elevation of technique to appeal to nothing but the senses. "The foundation on which I stand as an artist is that all art must appeal to the intellect. Then we're making a contribution to civilisation to the uplifting of man. But if we chose to indulge ourselves and chase dollars and fame at the expense of artistic integrity, if we smear the line between entertainment and art, we're in trouble."

"And the operatic world is in trouble because it's being invaded by big PR, the personality cult, techniques that are creating a false image to elevate people."

The purpose of performance, Vickers says, is to try and transmit what the singer

perceives as the composer's message. The great operatic roles challenge the singer to live up to those creations which are more important than the composers who made them, and that means going beyond the notes.

"If one chooses not to expand the talent then you'd deny Beethoven when he says I write from the heart to the heart. And by the way I think Beethoven was wrong. He didn't write to the heart but to the head. He didn't go far enough with the analogy."

The real lessons for Vickers came once he reached the first XI at Covent Garden. He lists six crucial experiences: the Don Carlo with Visconti and Giulini at Covent Garden; Peter Grimes at the Met; Jounis at the Met; Poppea in Paris; Parsifal at Covent Garden; Otello in Salzburg.

The reason I learnt is I was not instructed. Giulini entered into an immense collaboration with Luchino Visconti, with Gobbi, Brownstijn, Christoff, and with me, little me. And these are the great moments of my career because there was no prima donna. There was no one authority cramming down our throats how to do it, but a mutual cooperation to serve the art form, and try and discover what Verdi was trying to say about eternal, universal things."

Vickers says he knows his own shortcomings better than anybody. He says — and it sounds naïve but I'm sure it's true — that he feels ashamed at how far he always falls short of what he aims to achieve. He talks of reaching out for a standard that constantly recedes "and if it doesn't then it becomes an appeal to the lowest common denominator for the maximum amount of money."

I suggested that at least he knew what his voice would do, beyond my copy of the score. "It never does the things I want it to do. What I see in the score, what I've discovered of the profounder meaning of what the work is about, is so beyond my copy of the score that it's one of the frustrating and sad aspects of being an artist. The frustration of a composer putting his feelings on paper must be immense. The music he's creating begins to move. Music illuminates the profundity of meaning in words like nothing else can that I know of."



Richard Roud on Bergman's King Lear in Paris

The red light version

IT'S hard to imagine a triumphant production of King Lear in which Lear, Gloucester and the Fool are all mis-cast or inadequate, and in which some shocking liberties are taken with Shakespeare. But Ingmar Bergman and the Royal Dramatic Theatre of Stockholm have done just that in their production in Swedish, which has just completed a week's run at the Theatre de l'Europe.

Lear is played by Jari Kulle, who has starred in several Bergman films (Now about These Women and The Devil's Eye), and it is odd that when Bergman made The Devil's Eye, Kulle protested before the shooting that he couldn't do that "burnt-out, worn-out figure." "He's not my type. I can't do him." And Bergman admitted afterwards that Kulle had been right. That was in 1968, and 17 years later Kulle still can't play a tragic figure.

But Goneril, Cordelia, and Edmund are all magnificent, particularly Lena Olin as Cordelia. And the production is brilliantly inventive. The storm, for instance, is done as I have never seen it before. As it approaches, at the end of act 2, a red light from the back of the theatre overwhelms the stage, and a sound like that of an approaching jet is heard. The electronic sound, increases in volume and simultaneously lowers in pitch until the very floor of the theatre begins to vibrate, really frightening the audience.

And where the play simply tells us that Kent reappears, disguised, after his banishment, Bergman cleverly shows the actor who plays Kent pulling at his hair, and off comes a wig, tugging at his beard and moustache, which also come off in his hands, and, hey presto, Kent is disguised.

On the other hand, some of the inventions are unfaithful to the play. There's nothing in the text to suggest that Goneril is having an affair with her steward Oswald, so it is difficult to justify the scene in act 2 in which Goneril, facing the audience, suddenly pushes Oswald to his knees, facing her, and throws her long skirt over him, covering him completely.

There is no visible movement under the skirt, but Goneril starts to make some peculiar noises, and soon has what can only be called a stylized orgasm.

The whole production is very sex-oriented. Kurosawa called his Macbeth "Cobweb Castle"; this Lear could be called Codpiece Castle. Although the costumes are vague as to period, codpieces are the order of the day, and very prominent they are. In the act when Edgar kills Edmund, all Shakespeare tells us is "they fight". Bergman has Edgar come on stage dressed as an executioner, complete with hood, and someone binds the two men together at the waist with a leather band, and codpiece against codpiece, they fight it out in front of us. Effective, perhaps, but unlikely.

Then there is the crown which Lear relinquishes early on. It too, remains on stage, symbolically spotlighted, until, at the very end, Oswald (whom Shakespeare has killed off in act 4, scene 6) seizes it and brings it towards Edgar and Albany.

There is a blinding flash of lightning, and the Scarlet signet ring, which has been the one decider for the play, and which seemed to be a wall, is suddenly revealed to be cloth, for it crashes to the ground, revealing the back-stage area with the stage-hands, lighting board, and all the rest. Then, blackness, and the play is over.

What this is supposed to signify I cannot say, but it provided what Variety would call a "so-called" ending to the evening. A real coup de theatre, as the French would (and did) say. So when Bergman himself appeared for the curtain call, the theatre went wild. It was magnificent all right, but was it Shakespeare?

First steps in a Kipling Odissi

Kenneth Rea previews an Indian dance version of Mowgli



The Dhananjayans — both appear in the dance drama

THE body language of Indian dance, fixed about 2,000 years ago, can be used to tell almost any story, so some say. The point will be tested when the Academy of Indian Dance launches The Adventures of Mowgli, a major dance-drama based on Kipling's Jungle Book. After its season at the Bloomsbury Theatre, opening on Tuesday, Mowgli goes on a national tour which could do more than anything else yet to popularise Indian dance in Britain.

So far the Academy has limited itself to organising recitals, running the occasional conference and going into schools to teach Indian dance. But the director, John Chapman, felt that to reach a much wider public he needed something on a more spectacular scale that could appeal to both Europeans and Asians. Adults and children. Hence Mowgli, with a cast of ten.

One of India's most innovative choreographers, V. F.

Dhananjayan will portray Mowgli and arrange the story for dance. To achieve the colour and variety he wanted, he has fused together four different styles: Bharata Natyam, famed for its expressive and delicate gestures as well as its storytelling potential; Kathakali, the most vigorous and dramatic of all the classical styles; Odissi, and the flamboyant Kathak whose intricate rhythms and footwork have much in common with flamenco.

Dhananjayan is one of many who feel that Indian dance needs to be brought firmly into the 20th century if it is to survive. "Of course artists can create new stories," he says. "So long as they don't lose the aesthetic. I've recently been demonstrating this to young students who ask me, what about a submarine? I say, 'show a plane taking off'."

In other words, the Academy of Indian Dance could, theoretically, stage anything

from Ben Hur to Star Wars. Dhananjayan gleefully agrees. "Yes it could, because the potentialities of the medium are so rich. The traditional things we have are only a beginning, not an end."

Not everyone in India shares this view. "If you do something unconventional, there will be heavy criticism," he says. "So most of the classical dancers are afraid of getting away from their own set-up. Another problem is finance. The Indian Government is trying to promote the arts, but politics comes into it. If you're influential with the government, you are favoured with a grant or a tour. But if like me, you are concerned only about your work, you usually get nothing."

Dhananjayan's approach on Mowgli has been to expand the scope of the classical technique without sacrificing its original beauty. In conven-

tional Indian choreography, the story is conveyed by the lyrics which the dancer interprets through facial expressions and mudras (hand gestures). Some techniques have been retained, but Dhananjayan has eliminated the words to make it more universal and give emphasis to the music — a large-scale pre-recorded score using traditional Indian and western instruments — and a synthesizer.

"I was trying to create new movements, especially for the birds and animals," he explains. "At first I worked with my own artists in Madras and developed some ideas. Only after I had choreographed the whole thing, the composer, Vijay Raghav Rao came in."

Traditional gestures and movements have been extended to include the whole body, or in the case of an animal like the panther, steps were borrowed from the folk theatre. Scenery and

costumes will suggest the animals in their jungle setting.

But the most significant aspect of The Adventures of Mowgli is that it could not have happened in India. It has grown out of an interaction between British and Indian culture here, where the role of Indian dance is quite different. In order to fit into the local dance scene, resident Indian dancers have found that they have to broaden their approach: one of the Academy's dancers currently works with the multi-cultural Union Dance Company; another performs alongside flamenco dancers. Both have felt stimulated by the contact.

The challenge of performing to audiences who do not know the difference between a mudra and a pappadam is likely to produce the kind of healthy innovation that will further the art without threatening its traditional basis.

BRIEFING

THEATRE

YURI LYUBIMOV'S production of *The Possessed*, first seen at the Odeon in Paris, arrives at the Almeida, Sunnyside, York and Robert Edmondson star in *A Private Tragedy* at the Palace Theatre. Watford: Leon Rubin directs *Michael Hayes* in *Tom and Viv* returns to the Royal Court Theatre in New York: Edward Herrmann now plays *T. S. Eliot*. Julie Covington repeats her portrayal of *Viv*. The Colwyn Theatre Trust presents this

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year's community play, *The Ballad of Tilly Hake* by Sheila Yeger at the King's School, Ottery St Mary. The York Theatre Company offers a new production, *Bryony Lavery's Origin of the Species*, looking at Darwin's best-seller, comes to the Drill Hall in a monstrous Regent production. RSC actors past and present join forces to present *Where There's a Will*, in aid of the Ethiopian Appeal Fund, at the Barbican this Sunday.

Recommended
Mother Courage (Barbican: Wednesday, Thursday); *Brecht without directorial clichés* and with a fine performance by Judi Dench last performance.

The Government Inspector (Olivier: Friday, Saturday); *Richard Eyre's* production brings out the dark side of Gogol's masterpiece: *Rik Mayall* makes a turbulent Khlestakov.

Michael Billington
OPERA
KENT Opera unveil their new *Barrymore* production Thursday, tomorrow week, then touring to Southsea, Norwich, Plymouth and Eastbourne, with Roger Butler in designs, and Jonathan Hales producing opera for

the first time. Arnold Ostrman, Swedish maestro of authenticity, conducts Gordon Sandison as Figaro, Brian James as Rosina, Francis Egerton as the Count. The pop Rossini has already been transformed into a Citi-style farce by Scottish Opera (Edinburgh tomorrow, Glasgow Tuesday, Thursday, next Saturday). It pops up at Covent Garden (next Friday, Tuesday week). Gabriels Ferro conducting Alicia Nafé as Rosina and Deon van der Walt as Almaviva all make their Royal Opera debuts. The fine home-grown Figaro is Thomas Allen.

Buridice by Caccini (Nereid Gallery at the British Museum Wednesday) is the first Camden Festival opera in concert performance and authentic rig. Philip Pickett.

Faëlie (Coliseum tonight, Wednesday tomorrow week) returns to the KNO rep in the brutalist Herz staging, with Barstow as Leonore, Rowland Sidwell as Florestan, Mark Elder conducting. Also in the rep here: *Count Ory* (tomorrow, Thursday), and *Xerxes* (next Friday), the irretrievable Handel staging by Nicholas Hynes with Mackerras conducting a superb cast.

Don't miss: *Samson* (Covent Garden tomorrow) with Vickers, Vanessa, Last chance.

Tamara (Leeds tonight, Nottingham Thursday) produced and designed by Philip Prowse, has Felicity Palmer, Eddwen Harry, Sally Burgess heading a strong cast. Also in the Opera North rep: the successful new *Travlers* (Leeds tomorrow, Nottingham Tuesday, next Friday). *Norma* (Cardiff tonight, Birmingham Tuesday, next Friday), is excellently conducted by Julian Smith, but has rather bland singing from Susan Murphy. Also in the WNO rep: *Carmen* (Birmingham Thursday) with Arthur Davies as Jose, and the new *Siegfried* (Cardiff tomorrow, Birmingham next Saturday) with Jeffrey Lawton as the young hero.

Tom Sutcliffe

DANCE

BALLET Rambert at Sadler's Wells has a change of programme next Monday to Thursday. The first London performance of *Don Quixote* is an occasion for some Revolutionary Gestures, to music by Michael Sahl, with designs by John Macfarlane and lighting by Jennifer Tip. The programme with intimate Pages and Colour Moves. The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden dances *The Sleeping Beauty* tomorrow afternoon with Fiona Chadwick as An-

rona and Derek Deane replacing the injured Wayne Eagling as the Prince. Next Tuesday is *Mannon* with Alessandra Ferrari in the title role. Anthony Dowell dancing Des Grieux (for Eagling) at Kenneth MacMillan's request, and Ashley Page making his debut as Lescart. On Wednesday there is a triple bill of *The Firebird*, *Different Drummer* and *Facade*.

Lurching Darts the new collaboration between Matthew Hawkins, Ann Dickle, Tom Yang and Deborah Hedderwick has its London premiere tonight and tomorrow at the Place.

At Sadler's Wells on Sunday there is a Dance and Music Benefit for Chile called *Viva 88* at which the Czech dancers Hana Vlachova and Vlastimil Herpacs can be seen for the first time in England.

Mary Clarke

ROCK

ICA rock week: ICA, The Mail (Thursday through Sunday). Two highlights of this independent's field day are Manzanera's James, a scratchy and intriguing pop-folk quartet — much admired by The Smiths' and Morrissey, and some swash. Nihilist punk theorists from Manhattan. Tina Turner: Wembley Arena (Friday, Saturday, Sunday).

Second time around as megastar for the leopard-skin queen of kitsch raunch. Her current set is adult-orientated, but last year's version of *Let's Stay Together* showed she still has the pipes.

Long Ryders: Plymouth Poly (Thursday). Zestful country-rockers from L.A. hark back to the age of the Flying Burrito Brothers, bridging the gap between rockers Jason and the Scorchers and purists Rank and File. London dates over next weekend.

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The last chance to learn

When the Chancellor rises to his feet next Tuesday he will be delivering a Budget for political survival, one which may, in reality, be the Government's last chance to reduce the four million or so without proper jobs before the next election canters over the horizon. But what we look like being offered is, disastrously, more of the same policies which for six successive years have not just failed to deliver promises of reduced unemployment, but have accompanied even higher record levels. And with no end in sight.

No-one blames Mrs Thatcher for the international recession. The charge against her, still, is that by deliberately pursuing restrictive financial policies (even though they failed to be as restrictive as she would have liked) she has willfully presided over ever higher unemployment at a time when, awash with North Sea oil money, the economy could have been in the midst of investment-led expansion.

This financial suffocation looks set to continue. Not because it works, but because it is the Holy Grail. Even at this late stage the Chancellor should relent in three crucial areas. First, instead of contracting Government borrowing (as a proportion of the economy) even further in the misbegotten hope that interest rates will fall, the Chancellor should borrow more money to finance jobs and investment. (For the record, interest rates are now much higher than when Mrs Thatcher embarked on her successful mission to reduce borrowing in 1979.) Why the Government should encourage individuals to borrow up to 250 per cent of their annual incomes to buy capital assets (home ownership) yet get into a panic at the thought of its own borrowing reaching a mere 3.5 per cent of national income has never been coherently explained. Or even, alas, properly considered.

As successive reports (by the National

Economic Development Office and others) have shown, we desperately need to spend money merely to prevent imminent deterioration of the nation's infrastructure — roads, bridges, houses, and sewers — let alone expanding it as we ought to be doing. An overwhelming weight of independent opinion concludes that spending on capital projects is far more cost effective in terms of creating jobs than the Government's dogmatic insistence on raising tax thresholds. Surely it is more sensible to create jobs by spending on infrastructure (which will ultimately reduce costs for the private sector) rather than increasing the "incentive" of poorer people to seek jobs, which on the evidence of the Government's statistics for vacancies do not even exist on the scale envisaged? If the Chancellor really wants to "prime" people back into jobs then he is in a uniquely privileged position to do so, because every job he creates through well judged public spending "saves" 25,000 a year, which is what it costs the taxpayer to keep someone unemployed.

Second, the Chancellor must make a concerted attack on poverty and reverse the unacceptable trend towards a middle class welfare state. The latest turn of the ratchet, an increase in prescription charges to 22 (a 1,000 per cent rise since 1979) was conveniently announced this week in advance of the Budget headlines. It is only the latest of a series of measures, the most grotesque of which was the progressive reduction of housing subsidies to council tenants while leaving mortgage holders uncashed at an annual cost to the taxpayer of over £3.5 billion. The rich have already received the biggest relaxation of taxation for higher rates ever recorded and will benefit from further easements to capital gains tax if Budget rumours prove true. According to an excellent Mori poll (published this week in a new book *Poor Britain*, George, Allen and Unwin) seven million people had to forgo food at some stage in the most recent year for lack of money. That same poll shows that the great British public, far from baying for tax cuts would happily pay an extra 1p in the pound in income tax if it enabled poor people to afford the items regarded as necessities.

If the Government's aim really is to reduce the so-called "poverty trap," then

easily the most cost effective way is to raise child benefits. Most of the victims of the poverty trap (when low income families are no better off with increased earnings because of lost benefits) are found among families drawing child benefit. By contrast the cash benefit of higher tax thresholds — as advocated by Mr Lawson — percolate right up the income scale. Reflation through poverty relief also has a benign economic impact because the poorest people almost certainly have a higher propensity to buy British products than comfortably off taxpayers who have a habit of blowing any windfall on imports.

The third priority is to help industry to create more wealth and jobs. Here, far from no alternative, there is an embarrassment of suggestions to choose from. These include planned strategic investments — like the Lumos microchip company — plus expansion of the local authority enterprise boards (as advocated by Labour), cheap industrial credit, and a cut in employers' national insurance contributions (Alliance) or expansion of youth training and community schemes which command even wider support. It is interesting that neither the Alliance nor Labour suggests a sudden increase in Government borrowing which might give the battered economy too sharp a shock. Neither would add more than £2 billion to Government projections. Most of the detailed measures would also command support from Tory Wets, as a responsible and cost effective approach.

Future historians will be hard pressed to assess the depth of incompetence of a Government which squandered around £12 billion a year of "windfall" revenue from the North Sea instead of being used to lay the foundations for the country's future against the day, not far off, when the wells start to run dry, the bounty was used to finance the accelerated decline of industry, the profitless pit of the dole queue. Unless the Chancellor can step back from his obsession with tax juggling to produce a real Budget for jobs, he will have to accept the judgment of the nation. Above all he should not have the gall any more to pretend there was no other way. There was and there still is. This may be his last chance to learn.

Swann's rather winding way

The Swann report on education and the ethnic minorities, finally published yesterday, is very much a document of its time. A generation ago, hardly any attention was given to the issues which have preoccupied the Swann committee for six long years. If white British people thought about educational needs of minorities at all, it was to assume that children of other races were more than usually motivated and disciplined to get on. If a race dimension was acknowledged, then the comprehensive revolution would solve it, along with other inequalities.

By the 1970s, though, it all looked more difficult. Ethnic minorities had not dissolved into the melting pot. Far from it. Their special educational needs were more obvious than before. Early concern focussed on the disproportionately high numbers of West Indians who were being held back within the school system, whether by being classified as educationally sub-normal (and thus taken out of the mainstream) or by general under-achievement (and thus being squeezed out of academic subjects into practical and recreational parts of the curriculum). These issues have not disappeared. Indeed, under-achievement, as the Swann report and its extensive research programme confirm, is an even wider concern today. Other groups suffer, as well as West Indians. Underachievement affects Bangladeshi children (less than it does other Asians) and Turkish (but not Greek) Cypriots. This has been augmented by the particular concerns of different Asian groups: the lack of teaching in languages other than English (again, this is a long-standing preoccupation of other groups as well, notably the Welsh); and a concern to protect minority religious and cultural standards (something that has also long concerned Jews, among others).

The result has been a well-intentioned, uneven shift towards multi-cultural education. It is a banner under which cluster a range of sometimes contradictory initiatives. What unifies it is a belief that ethnic mi-

nority consumer satisfaction with education will be improved by providing greater cultural diversity in the curriculum and the school environment. The trouble is that the research surveys go on reporting under-achievement. In race, as in other dimensions, this relative failure of comprehensive schools to satisfy sometimes utopian expectations has had demoralising effects. Recession has made things even worse. As a result, Swann is launched into an increasingly polarised world. At one extreme there is the laissez-faire individualist reflex (often also an explicitly racist one) that says educational advance is a matter of individual commitment and that special programmes are neither desirable nor effective. At the other extreme, no less negative in its way, is the determinist view that says Britain's endemic racism simply aborts any possibility of general educational advance for blacks.

Swann's way, in a report of appropriately Proustian length and meanderings, lies between all available extremes. The report is long on analysis, but short on sharp solutions. This is not to say it lacks any concrete proposals. There are, indeed, some good ones: the DES, at last, and all LEAs (not just the few pioneers) must accept responsibility for developing what is now to be called a pluralist curriculum; they must do more to stamp out racism in schools; the teaching of English must be a priority for all; English as a second language teaching must take place inside schools, not outside; the 1944 Act's provisions on religious worship and education should be reviewed. And what the report rejects (separate state supported ethnic minority schools; bilingual education) is just as sound. But this is essentially a report about attitudes and perceptions, and those are the kind of things that would have left even an Edwin Chadwick short of answers. The report's avoidance of didacticism, dogma and rhetorical gesture is characteristic of the "new realism" (or should it be new uncertainty?) that now affects much reformist thinking on many subjects. The result, though, is a failure to spell out an agenda for teachers that means, in turn, that the Swann report will live on as a much thumbed reference book, not as a manifesto for change.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Make-believe jobs that are a poor substitute for real work

Sir,—Richard Layard's article (Agenda, March 8) is to be welcomed for pointing to many of the Budget options the Chancellor has if he really wants to reduce unemployment, rather than give tax cuts to those groups who have already done very well out of Mrs Thatcher's period of office. However, his uncritical endorsement of a massive expansion of the Community Programme needs to be challenged.

The net cost of places on the CP may be cheap for the Exchequer, but that is only because of the poverty wages offered to many of its participants. It should be remembered that when this programme was expanded to its current 130,000 places, it introduced a rigid formula whereby any scheme could only pay an average wage of £80 (now £83) a week, to be achieved through a mixture of part time and full time posts. About two-thirds of places on CP are part time and on average pay just over £53 a week. This hardly constitutes a generous offer to those bearing the heaviest cost of this government's economic policies.

Professor Layard also fails to acknowledge the acute problems that the CP, and the broader activities of the Manpower Services Commission, are creating across a whole range of services and voluntary agencies. The voluntary sector is being transformed. Many organisations have become subcontractors for the MSC and their traditional activities have been increasingly subordinated to their new role in the management of unemployment.

In a context of expenditure cuts and rate capping, the CP is also starting to pose important questions for those working in local authorities and health services, whose activities and jobs are being eroded and reduced through MSC interventions.

Even if these services and agencies are able to satisfy some community needs through CP, where is the evidence that this benefits the long term unemployed? More than 60 per cent of them go straight back to the dole after completing their year on CP. Clearly, long term unemployment has damaging social and psychological effects, but surely policy should be aimed at the creation of secure employment rather than make-work schemes which give the long term unemployed a tantalising taste of work only to throw them back on the scrap heap after a year.

Meanwhile, the most acute problem confronting the long term unemployed is that of poverty. If the Chancellor is genuinely interested in their welfare he should take immediate steps to extend the long term rate of supplementary benefit to them. In the words of the Social Security Advisory Committee in November 1983, "It is indefensible that unemployed people should be obliged to live on a benefit which is at present £10.60 a week less for a couple, than the amount thought necessary for other people who depend on supplementary benefit for long periods."

As to the "job guarantee" that Professor Layard would like introduced, he

would recognise that the economic compulsion which would force the long term unemployed to participate in a massively expanded CP could very rapidly begin to look like the "test" and "task" work that the able-bodied unemployed used to be required to perform under the Poor Laws. Another return to Victorian values?—Yours sincerely, (Dr) D. J. Finn, Unemployment Unit, London W1.

Sir,—Richard Layard argues in his article (Guardian, March 8) that the Chancellor "should of course cut taxes, but he should also increase real expenditure." He suggests that in fact the Chancellor will cut taxes and cut expenditure, with no increase in budget deficit. Surely there is a flaw in both arguments regarding cutting taxes. Both are based on the proposition that tax cuts lead to increased consumption and investment — true enough, but the amount of tax cuts actually translates into investment in British industry is arguably very small — according to Christopher Huhne (Guardian, February 28) "5 per cent income tax cut raises GDP by only 0.1 per cent after 3 years."

Whilst the Chancellor's view is the worst of all possible worlds, Layard's view suffers from the problem of increased budget deficit. Summa is to increase both taxes and expenditure?

The benefits of this are, firstly, that increased expenditure is offset by increased income, secondly, government can direct all of its expenditure to sectors that benefit British industry, and thirdly, it can do it on a significant scale, in contrast to large numbers of (relatively) small private investors. M.W. Denning, Newtown, Powys.

Sir,—It was recently reported that Shell and Esso are now going to spend £80 million in developing the Terna North Sea oil potential. Due to the fact that this proposed development is now not going to be taxed so heavily.

The principle involved is essential: a reduction of tax allows an unviable proposition to become an earner of wealth, producing all the effects that this country appears to need—employment, invigoration of industry and investment.

I run a small marginal business. In order to maintain the employment of 30 men our production has to earn at least enough to cover three basic costs ie, wages, materials and taxation. Taxes include Paye, National Insurance and VAT and forms 20 per cent of the costs of production.

If such taxes as these, which form such a significant proportion of the cost of production, were reduced for businesses that could function with the full load, then many thousands of marginal enterprises would flourish. What is good for North Sea Oil production is also good for Lancashire cotton or Northampton shoes. M. S. Bloomfield, London W12

The unpardonable attitudes struck by the NCB



Sir,—Those arguing for and against an "amnesty" for sacked miners are missing the point. An "amnesty" is a pardon. The miners are not asking for "pardons," they are asking for the reinstatement of men sacked by the NCB, often for simply being accused of a crime. Many of those sacked were not even convicted, and in some cases charges were dropped. In Kent, leaders of the area NUM were sacked for sitting in down a pit to prove that the NCB were lying.

Since when has the conviction, let alone the mere accusation, of a criminal offence automatically led to the sack? If this is to be a general rule in this country, there are certain MPs whose jobs may be in danger! For, if there is an NCB principle that "criminal" miners are to be sacked, why does this not also apply to recalcitrant working miners?—Yours sincerely, Steve Rappart, London SW8.

Sir,—Your correspondent Mr Bob Fine (March 11) appears to be in a state of

confusion in his letter on the subject of the miners' strike. I would like the opportunity to draw his attention to what appear to me to be very elementary mistakes. He refers to the verdicts arrived at by the police. He should know that the police do not arrive at verdicts; that is a matter for the courts alone. He also speaks of a large body of evidence demonstrating police partiality: I would doubt that any such evidence exists. What the police have done is to maintain the rule of law.

He refers to intimidation and mass picketing and sug-

gests that the two should not be linked: let him face one and he will soon find out. The right to strike is not limited by law, but the right to mass picket is, and rightly so. Intimidation of people who want to work is not acceptable in this or any other civilised country. He refers also to the channels of democratic police accountability, yet there was nothing to bring these into play for the police were merely doing their job of keeping the peace. The National Reporting Centre has now been disbanded, it's job having been completed to the satisfaction of the vast

How Powell's law could make life a misery

Sir,—I would like to conceive by my husband. Indeed, I think I have a right to conceive a child—if possible. He has a condition known as "oligospermia," or too few sperms for conception by intercourse. We were fortunate, after the diagnosis was made in 1982, to be offered a chance of pregnancy by invitro fertilisation. To date, we have managed to achieve fertilisation with my husband's sperms in five cycles out of seven when oocytes or eggs have been retrieved from my ovaries. Five times I have had the healthiest embryos replaced at the two, three or four-cell stage of development. These embryos have failed to implant and we remain childless.

At present, the cause of this inability to implant is unknown but we wait in anticipation of further scientific advances; advances which can only be made by continued observation and research of further available embryos in the laboratory. Work which will be unduly affected by the restrictive procedures proposed by the Enoch Powell Bill. If Mr Powell gets his way, we will seek an alternative

majority of peace-loving citizens of this country.

I hope that when the Labour Party decides to reform the criminal justice system, it will not give strikers the right to come and smash my windows and threaten my life. The police put a stop to that sort of thing this time and thank heavens they did so. Yours faithfully, D.B. Robson, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

Sir,—Mr Alfist (Letters, March 11) claims that socialist show a "double standard" in requesting an amnesty for strikers whilst continuing to be abusive to those who scabbed. Yet he doesn't comment on the apparently similarly hypocritical attitude of the NCB, who require miners to grant an immediate amnesty to scabs whilst they continue to pick out and sack many men who played leading roles in the strike. One has to be particularly illuded by prejudice to characterise the NUM — but not the NCB — as motivated by "pathological vindictiveness."

In fact, neither the NUM

nor NCB have "double standards"; but they do have different standards. To the NCB, the only offences that warrant punishment are those against the "law of the land," and against NCB property and rules. But a dedicated trade unionist considers scabbing to be a far more serious offence than pushing a policeman on a picket line, or whatever, and therefore any "punishment" for the former offence should be longer lasting than for the latter.

The worrying aspect of this clash of standards — and the failure to perceive it as a clash of standards — is the precise opposite to Mr Alfist's glib attempt to link socialism with nazism. Rather, it is that this government has shown in the last few years that it regards any group in this country whose standards are different from those of the government, or who feel loyalty to any other organisation, as an "enemy within" — and it is attempting to destroy them. That, Mr Alfist, is a textbook definition of fascism.—Yours Peter Morris, University of Liverpool.

Spell bound

Sir,—Please note that the name of the new Soviet leader should be spelt Gorbachev, and not Gorbachey, as you practise. Strangely enough, the English speaking world made the same mistake—obviously out of linguistic ignorance—with Nikita Chruschev.—Yours, T. C. Freeman, Pontymer, Gwent.

If Howard Fry is genuinely concerned at infringements of rights in Africa (and not merely to take the heat off apartheid) and if he has particular knowledge of places where people are being tyrannised, then he would be better occupied telling us about them instead of seeking to discredit people who know what they are talking about on South Africa. Yours sincerely, Walter Hain, Fawcett Park Road, Putney, London SW15.

Regions of the damned

Sir,—Martin Walker (Gorbachev's Russia, Guardian, March 11) is slightly inaccurate: the oprichnina wasn't Ivan the Terrible's dreaded police: it was the "separate estate" — an archipelago of towns and areas under the direct rule and that of the oprichniki. It contrasted with the zemshchina where more conventional methods still prevailed — theoretically at least.

It was like Thatcher's UK: most of us southerners in the zemshchina believe we can't be harassed, beaten, locked up without trial, made beggars for life. But ask those who live in Thatcher's oprichnina, which takes in mining villages, US bases, Ulster, Whitehall during marches, etc! Yours faithfully, George Stern, London N6.

Sir,—Bernard Dobson is absolutely correct when he says that gays serve with "honour and bravery" in the armed forces (March 13). Many have died for their country, from the last war to the Falklands. Many have been decorated for their actions. They serve with distinction today in all areas of the direct rule in this country and abroad.

The standard MoD statement, justifying their discriminatory laws towards gays shows the ignorance, fear and bigotry of the military attitude towards gay sexuality. Many gays are affected by these archaic laws each year. At Ease — 1 Secker Street, London SE1 — deals with many cases,

but more go unheeded or unreported due to the prevailing atmosphere of fear and misunderstanding. Having concerned myself with this issue for the last six years — including trying to set up a gay ex-military group — I know that many homosexuals would like to remain in the military, to do the jobs they were trained for, without the fear of questioning, interrogation, discrimination, courts martial and probable imprisonment.

I too, in my time in the RAF from 1969 to 1975, "broke the law" on numerous occasions. I had "relations" with several people and each of them had others, so it's not an isolated thing, as the MoD always suggests.

It's about time that the armed forces were no longer exempt from the reforms carried out in 1967 and that courts martial and imprisonment of gays be stopped immediately. — Yours John McMullen, Stratford Street, London E14.

Sir,—I can't understand Bernard Dobson's protest against the MoD for discharging gay men from the forces. The world is groaning under the weight of real men proving themselves by preparing to kill each other (and everyone else). Why on earth would gays want to join in as well? — Yours Graeme Woolaston, Brighton.

A COUNTRY DIARY

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: A happy conjunction of events brought me north to a morning working commitment on the second day of the Cheltenham National Hunt Festival which, as a non racing man, I needed to be reminded is the pinnacle of the winter racing season. After an opening day of bright sunshine following a light frost the second day was damp and drear as a cold front brought a band of rain south over the country. But it did little to dampen the spirits of the remarkable company which descends annually to Cheltenham for this festival of racing. The occasion tends to be overwhelmingly an Irish one. The Irish arrive, according

to the state of their finances, by means as diverse as the Fishguard ferry and British Rail to the Orient Express and a private helicopter. The international visitors arrive to deprive them of any winnings include the pickpockets, card sharps and the ladies of the demi mode who establish themselves for a four-day shift in the pick of the local hotels. Before the afternoon card I lunched in a congenial company which included a local magistrate who winced in a slightly bemused fashion at the extra mornings of dispensing instant justice that the festival threw up for the local bench. The landlord, himself a one time jump jockey now retired — "I

grew too heavy at 17" — presided in licenced premises renamed after Little Owl, the 1981 Gold Cup winner a locally trained and ridden horse. As a historian of the turf he recounted his researches on riding weights and showed how the undernourished population of a century ago produced many young jockeys weighing little more than six stone. Today, with the higher nutritional standards, average weights are almost two stone heavier. The soft accents of Ireland notes suddenly evaporated — it was time for the first race and the serious business of the day beckoned at Prestbury Park — COLIN LUCKHURST.

South Africa's pact with Mozambique is one year old and in ruins. It appears to have achieved nothing. JOSEPH HANLON reports

The war of attrition behind a screen of peace

SOUTH Africa's greatest diplomatic triumph, its non-aggression pact with Mozambique, is on the verge of collapse. Mozambique and South African leaders met yesterday for the first time since President Samora Machel publicly accused Pretoria of violating the Nkomati Accord which they signed only a year ago.

Mr Machel staked his personal prestige, both internally and internationally, on his belief that South Africa would at least partially honour the accord. For ten months, he stuck to his view that Pretoria's top leadership was abiding by the deal, despite all the contrary evidence and the growing pressure from his own government and other Front Line leaders. He has continued violations on spillover in the South African government or elements within the army acting against government institutions.

It was not until last month that the President admitted publicly that the South African government itself was ignoring the accord. And only last week did he finally join with other Front Line States in labelling the accord a failure. Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere was speaking for all the Front Line States after their meeting last Friday in Lusaka when he said that the Nkomati pact "had not achieved anything".

Under the accord, Mozambique agreed to expel most African National Congress members, while South Africa agreed to end its support for the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR or Renamo).

Pretoria peremptorily and publicly tossed out the ANC. But South Africa actually stepped up its support of the MNR. The audacity of Pretoria was shown by its dropping not only Machel, but European leaders as well. It was on the basis of Nkomati that Prime Minister (now State President) P.W. Botha made his triumphal tour of Europe last June.

Yet the signing of Nkomati was marked by an increase in support for the MNR and the launching of an assault on Maputo, which had previously been shielded. More than one thousand trained MNR men were sent over the South African border and paratroops were dropped near the capital, according to the Mozambique government.

The electricity line from South Africa to Mozambique was cut for the first time by sabotage teams now believed to have contained white officers. When Mr Botha was receiving his red carpet treatment in London, air drops to the MNR near Maputo reportedly reached record levels.

By late last year, Maputo was loosely encircled by the MNR with sporadic incidents in outer suburbs creating tension and demoralisation. Nevertheless, the capital is not under siege. It is still reasonably well supplied with food. People still travel, but with trepidation, as all the roads and railways leading out of Maputo are regularly attacked.

However, Nkomati did lead South Africa to internationalise support for the MNR. Supplies now also come from West Germany and Portugal, with the support of minority parties in both government coalitions (CSU and CSD respectively). They then go to Mozambique via Malawi as well as through Saudi Arabia and then the Comoros.

By December, the last month for which data is available from security sources, there were only two confirmed air drops to the MNR from South Africa, compared to eight from Malawi and two from the Comoros. But there were regular border crossings from South Africa and continued drops of supplies by South African boats.

Perhaps most disappointing, and worrying to all the Front Line States, has been the role of the United States, Britain, and Portugal. They pushed Mozambique into signing Nkomati and implied they would serve as guarantors. In practice they have done nothing to put pressure on South Africa, despite Mozambique joining the IMF and making other obvious signs of new openness towards the West. Indeed, the Portuguese government has allowed stepped up support for the MNR from Lisbon.

And some Front Line States are now privately worried about the role of the United States. They point out that US influence is sufficiently strong in both Malawi and Saudi Arabia that MNR support could not continue without at least tacit US approval, and may actually have active CIA involvement.

At present, it seems that Mozambique's readiness to sign Nkomati, followed by the increased success of the MNR, has led some in South Africa and the West to feel that substantial further concessions can be extracted.

Last month, the Mozambique government-run weekly *Magazine Tempo* said that it was apparent that South Africa's allies would pressure it to support Nkomati only if Mozambique swallowed certain "pills" that those allies have in their "political packages".

Pretoria is left with few options. It could turn to the East bloc and friendly African states for military help. But the Angolan experience is that even this is insufficient to drive out Pretoria's forces and only increases US support for South Africa.

Or Pretoria could try to negotiate with the MNR. Not only is the leadership implacably and unanimously opposed to this, but it is unclear who to negotiate with. There is no dominant central figure like UNITA's Jonas Savimbi, and it seems that various factions of the MNR are loyal to different internal and South African commanders, and only a few to the Portuguese leadership involved in talks last October.

Ironically, then, Pretoria goes into the new talks with Foreign Minister, Pik Botha knowing that its best hope is now the anti-apartheid movement in the West. The only chance to salvage Nkomati is that South Africa will have to make some concessions to head off the growing disinvestment campaign in the United States and oil boycott campaign in Holland.

Even then, perhaps the best Mozambique can hope for is that South Africa will ease off the pressure on Maputo and southern Mozambique. It is there that the MNR is still directly supplied from South Africa and still under Pretoria's direct control, and it is only there that South Africa has economic interests. Ending the war in the north will require agreement of Germany, Portugal, and the United States, and the swallowing of more "pills" than simply joining the IMF.

When the next Soviet leader meets his Politburo again next Thursday, he will see two empty chairs. The first is the one he vacated to take the dead of the long table in the high-backed room of the central committee building off Moscow's Staraya Ploshchad. The second empty seat he cannot ignore. It has been left vacant since Christmas Eve when they buried the old defence minister Dmitry Ustinov. Since then that vital sector of the Soviet hierarchy, the military, has been effectively disenfranchised in the Politburo.

Ever since Leonid Brezhnev and Mikhail Suslov launched their palace coup to unseat Nikita Khrushchev in 1959, the USSR has been governed by an effective triumvirate of the party, the military and the KGB. Under Brezhnev, the triumvirate was embodied in three men: Brezhnev himself, Yuri Andropov of the KGB, and the old defence minister Marshal Grechko.

When Grechko died in 1976, he was replaced by Marshal Ustinov, not a professional soldier but with the credentials of a protégé of Stalin, and the man who had reorganised the Soviet arms industry as the Germans advanced on Moscow.

But now the new defence minister, Marshal Sokolov, still awaits the Politburo seat which would once have seemed his due. The new KGB chief Viktor Chebrikov is still but a candidate member of the Politburo, without the right to vote. The old triumvirate system seems to have collapsed, with the civilians and the party holding untrammelled power.

Those vacant seats on the Politburo tell a story. As Brezhnev filled the Politburo with his cronies, who presented no real challenge to his leadership, the focus of power began to shift to the much more secret body, the Supreme Military Council. It began with four men, Brezhnev, Marshal Grechko, Andropov, and Ustinov, as the man in charge of defence industries, but as the years went by, more and more of the key central committee secretaries were co-opted onto the council.

But little has been heard of this shadowy body since

Leonid Brezhnev nine years ago. There may be another rising young general of Gorbachev's generation, whose time is about to come, but at this stage, attention is focussing increasingly on another civilian — the man who was seen as Gorbachev's main rival for the leadership, Grigory Romanov.

The former Leningrad party chief is 62, old enough to have fought through the siege of Leningrad in the second world war, and his 13 years on the important Leningrad district military council has given him a wide range of contacts in the officer corps. For almost two years, he has held the defence industries portfolio in the central committee, which means that he presides over the huge military-industrial complex.

Were Grigory Romanov to become minister of defence as well, he could well prove an uncomfortably powerful deputy to Mr Gorbachev. But such an appointment would fit the emerging pattern of the Kremlin leadership, which is to gather all the strings of power into the hands of the party.

Even the new KGB chief Viktor Chebrikov is not a career intelligence man. He was a party official who was brought into the KGB's Moscow HQ in Dzerzhinsky Square at the age of 44 to run the personnel and promotions section, and in effect to be the party's watchdog over the secret police.

And while the party is supreme in all the Moscow power centres, the military men have also lost their powerful voice in the disarmament negotiations. When the first Salt treaties were negotiated, Marshal Ogarkov was a full member of the delegation, the technical and military expert on whom the Soviet side depended. But there is no comparable military

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Yet the soldiers have two powerful arguments to hand as they press for more say in the councils of power. The first is the threat of President Reagan's star wars research programme. There is little doubt that the Soviets are well advanced in their own research, and indeed with the new phased-array radar system which seems designed for an anti-ballistic missile system, but they can now argue for more research funds and a crash programme to keep up with the Pentagon's scientists.

The second argument is that Marshal Ogarkov may have gone, but his demand for a new generation of "smart" conventional weapons to match Nato still lies on the table. Soviet armaments were publicly humiliated by the Beka's Valley two years ago, and their technical shortcomings were cruelly exposed. The soldiers' pleas to put their rights have already borne some fruit.

When the new 1985 budget was announced to the Supreme Soviet, the most prominent rise in public spending was a 12 per cent in the official defence budget, which hugely underestimates the real cost of the Soviet military machine.

Military pensions, research and development, the reserves and many of the running costs of defence are all excluded from the formal defence budget. So the 12 per cent increase seems to be calculated as a message to Nato that if there were to be a new arms race, the USSR would not be left behind.

With his determination to get the civilian economy moving, Mr Gorbachev may not be of a mind, or in a position, to give the military very much more. But there is a pressure building here which could cast a shadow over the hopes which are greeting Mr Gorbachev's assumption of power. As he faces that empty seat in the Politburo next Thursday, when the world's leaders have all flown home and the vast responsibility of leading this lumbering superpower is finally his alone, the question of what to do about the soldiers will assume urgent priority.



A salute from the old guard: Marshal Sokolov, Russia's stop-gap Minister of Defence

MARTIN WALKER concludes his study of the pressures on the new Kremlin regime

The might of the generals

Yuri Andropov took power and began to fill the Politburo with the new generation of younger men whose prime candidate, Mikhail Gorbachev, has now assumed the leadership.

Mikhail Gorbachev is the first Soviet leader without a military credential, or a second world war background to his name. His responsibilities during his rise in the party hierarchy were purely civilian. If he does not make the appointment of a top military man to the Politburo one of his first priorities, then a fundamental change in the Soviet system of power would seem to be under way.

The first sign of the taming of the military came under Nikita Khrushchev, almost 30 years ago, when he fired the war hero Marshal Zhukov from the defence ministry and cut the Red Army by almost a third, arguing that missiles were cheaper, more reliable and took less manpower. This attitude was one of the factors that helped to build the coalition which eventually toppled him.

After ten years of supreme power, Leonid Brezhnev felt secure enough to appoint Marshal Ustinov to bring the military firmly under party control. Marshal Ustinov held the growth in the defence budget to no more than two per cent a year. Nato and US intelligence estimates now acknowledge that this was less than Nato was spending, and began to impose serious constraints on the military procurement budget, which led to a spurt in military exports as the generals tried to make up their budgets from the Third World.

Last year, the Soviet chief of staff, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, was suddenly and dramatically replaced as chief of staff and Marshal Ustinov's heir apparent, probably because he had

GORBACHEV'S & RUSSIA

called too publicly for an increased defence budget to match Nato's growing lead in the new generation of "smart" conventional weapons, and also began to cast doubt on the wisdom of endless additions to nuclear overkill.

He was replaced by his deputy, Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, a second world war tank battalion commander and career soldier whose nearest access to the civilian power structure is to be one of the 319 members of the central committee.

The rest of the current military hierarchy is led by 74-year-old Marshal Sokolov, the stop-gap minister of defence, and the Warsaw Pact commander Marshal Kulikov, 64, who was pointedly passed over as defence minister by

Leonid Brezhnev nine years ago. There may be another rising young general of Gorbachev's generation, whose time is about to come, but at this stage, attention is focussing increasingly on another civilian — the man who was seen as Gorbachev's main rival for the leadership, Grigory Romanov.

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JOHN HOOPER on why the Government closed a corporation

The end of a slick operation

THE ABOLITION of the British National Oil Corporation is the boldest step this government has taken in the energy field, and may prove a more vigorous and decisive approach now that the miners' strike is out of the way and the Energy Secretary, Mr Peter Walker, is free to concentrate on other things.

It also brings to an end a period during which an important area of economic policy has been managed by the government in a way that was counter to everything it says and believes.

BNOC was set up specifically to interfere with the operation of a free market. It was created by the Labour government in 1975 to give the state an interest in the production and sale of North Sea oil, principally in order to ensure secure supplies.

Seven years later, the production side was hived off to become Britoil, leaving BNOC with an ill-assorted range of duties, including the management of the strategic on-shore pipeline network, a certain amount of product trading and the disposal of the 51 per cent of North Sea output to which BNOC was entitled by the Act under which it was set up.

Ever since the OPEC price rises of 1974, an increasing share of the world's oil has been bought and sold on the free market at "spot" prices rather than traded by companies and companies by means of contracts at official prices. Traditionally, spot prices have been higher than official prices. But since last summer they have been lower. It was this development which doomed BNOC.

Some 12 per cent of North Sea oil goes directly to BNOC in lieu of royalties. What happens to the rest depends on whether the company which pumps it out has a refinery of its own.

In the case of the so-called Seven Sisters — the giants of the oil business — and some smaller companies like Conoco, the crude oil is simply transferred to the company's platforms to its refineries. The 49 per cent which it has to itself is sold on paper by one department to another. The share to which the government is entitled is notionally sold to BNOC and all but the royalty crude is by then bought back by the company.

Tax on North Sea oil is levied on the price at which it changes hands. But in this case the oil does not change hands at all, so the price for these transactions is regarded as being BNOC's official price and until recently they were taxed accordingly.

But when the spot price dropped below the official price, companies with their own refineries suddenly had an incentive for selling their crude into the market and buying it back again to establish a case with the Inland Revenue that the price of their oil was lower

than the price on which the Treasury proposed to tax them. This dodge — known to the trade as "spinning" — was largely responsible for the massive increase in recent months of the amount of crude being traded on the free market.

Crude produced by companies which do not have their own refineries has always been sold onto the free market at a price which was 49 per cent by the companies themselves and in the case of the government 51 per cent. This is where the corporation was able to make a profit while spot prices were higher than official prices and where it started to make a loss as soon as the position was reversed.

Last October, BNOC was allowed to cut the official price at which it buys its oil from the smaller companies to a level closer to the spot price at which it sells it.

But the move produced such angry rumblings from OPEC that throughout the early part of the winter, as prices on the spot market continued to slide, the government refused to allow its oil traders to narrow the gap again.

However, being a government publicly committed to free market mechanisms, it could scarcely admit this, and when the oil minister, Mr Alec Buchanan-Smith, was brought before the Energy Select Committee in December to explain why Parliament should stump up £45 million to cover BNOC's losses, he gave a masterly performance in evasion and obfuscation.

In its report, the committee said that it would be "quite unacceptable" for any further money to be doled out "unless the Government is prepared expressly to announce that it is its policy to use BNOC's participation agreement to sup-

port the price of oil." The government's refusal for a further £25 million earlier this year prompted the committee to issue another highly critical report at the beginning of this week.

Wednesday's decision will at least silence the government from further criticism in Parliament. But it could result in a far more damaging breakdown in relations with the OPEC nations.

Ironically, though, OPEC could gain more than it loses from BNOC's abolition. Whatever price BNOC fixes makes no difference to the spot price whose remorseless decline is what has put OPEC under such pressure. Yet the existence of an official price, which will presumably disappear when BNOC does, has led — as we have seen — to a vast amount of extra oil being traded on the open market, and this more than anything has strengthened the hand of the traders who are OPEC's main enemies.

Nevertheless, in the sense that the government's decision is evidence of its reluctance to intervene in the workings of even a market so vital to Britain's interests as the oil market, OPEC will be right to worry.

It shows that those within the government and the bureaucracy who favour a drop in oil prices have got the upper hand.

Until now they have been held at bay by those who argue that while a fall could well be good for the world economy as a whole, Britain — as a major producer — would lose more than she would gain.

Although, not perhaps through BNOC, Britain is unquestionably in a position to prop up the oil price. The most obvious way she could achieve this would be by a cut in production. After Wednesday's decision, such a move is unthinkable.

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THE Times of India reports that Mr Muni Shushil Kumar of Religions is planning to buy 20,000 EEC cattle, earmarked for slaughter, because of tighter milk quotas, and ship them to India to make them sacred.

Stephen Cook

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Why the PM's Yankee doodling isn't dandy for Tory MPs



Ian Aitken

SINCE he ceased to be leader of the Conservative Party just over ten years ago, Mr Edward Heath has succeeded in carving out a very special role for himself on the world stage. Abroad he has become almost a guru in the field of Third World development; at home he has adopted the status of Keeper of the Conservative Conscience. Disraeli's representative on earth.

currently he occupies the exalted role mentioned above. He would very likely still be leader of the Conservative Party, and perhaps even Prime Minister, and Britain would be a far better place to live in.

Mr Heath's latest reminder to his fans (and with the benefit of hindsight, I count myself among them) comes at a particularly inauspicious moment. For in the past few days he has been saturating the organs of the media with a cascade of articles, speeches and television appearances in which he has outlined a comprehensive programme for the Alternative Conservative Government.

And a jolly good programme it is, not that it differs from the kind of joint programme which a tentative coalition of Labour, the Alliance Parties and the wet wing of the Conservative Party might be able to agree on. The kind of consensus in other words, which would be backed by virtually everybody in this country save for Mrs Thatcher, Mr Nigel Lawson and the handful of pooped-up fanatics who have managed to get their hands on the

levers of power. Oh, and Tony Benn, of course.

Mind you, a few of us might have some reservations about Mr Heath's well-known Euro-enthusiasm. But the essential ingredients of a programme for peace and national regeneration are there — starting with a rejection of Star Wars defence initiatives and built upon a real "Budget for Jobs", stemming from massive public investment.

Mr Heath's pronouncements also coincide with a kind of wet "spring offensive" Rank upon rank of ex-Cabinet ministers like Francis Pym and Jim Prior are about to fling themselves on the Thatcherite wire in an anti-monetarist attack designed to counter Mr Lawson's budget.

Yet this is the moment chosen by Mr Heath to go on yet another television show to (let us not mince our words) wringe about the manner in which he was brought down as party leader, and to complain about the way in which he was tricked, double-crossed and slandered by Mrs Thatcher and her campaign managers. If she had designed it herself, the Prime

Minister could hardly have constructed a more satisfactory means to remind her party just what she delivered them from in 1975.

This miscalculation seems likely to be gratefully employed by Mrs Thatcher's supporters to devalue not only Mr Heath's own political advocacy but also to undermine the parallel efforts of Messrs Pym, Prior and the rest of the Conservative Party's former Heath-men.

It may also bring home to many of the couple-of-hundred Tory MPs who were not around when Mr Heath was in charge that some of the things the Thatcherites say about him may even be true.

But there is a further and more serious misfortune in Mr Heath's timing. It could help to divert attention from a genuinely remarkable development at Westminster which is only now becoming discernable. For the truth is that Mrs Thatcher is currently losing the approval, admiration, and even the trust of her political colleagues much faster than she is dropping personal support in the public opinion polls.

To be sure, there were al-

ready some signs of a change of atmosphere from the post-election euphoria during 1984. Indeed, it would be remarkable if it were not so. Few Prime Ministers, as they approach the midpoint of a second administration, can hold the total loyalty of their followers.

Moreover, there are special factors in Mrs Thatcher's case which have nothing whatever to do with her personality or even her brand of radical liberal economic policy. They relate more directly to Mr Pym's fatal warning about the consequences of landslide majorities.

For it is painfully obvious to at least 50 or 60 Tory MPs that, just as they got to Westminster on a near miracle, they will need a second near-miracle to get back again next time. Like young folk on a Youth Training Scheme, they seem likely to complete their political training only to land back on the dole queue.

This is not an atmosphere conducive to loyalty, or even to docility, and it accounts for the bitterness of many Tory backbenchers.

But that is by no means the whole story. Indeed, if it

were, the problem would not be too serious for the Government. In the long run, even Tory MPs representing far-out marginal constituencies are aware that mass disloyalty is more likely to bring defeat than its opposite — a lesson Labour MPs are slowly learning.

But what has been happening in recent weeks at Westminster is wholly different, and does have a great deal to do with Mrs Thatcher's personality and political approach. For the fact is that many MPs and an even larger proportion of ministers are going off her.

Her abrasiveness has, to be sure, been much more evident since the general election than it was beforehand. Her entire style of running her Cabinet administration and party might (and was) expected to become more relaxed in the wake of such an amazing triumph. But it did not happen that way, and many of those who have had to deal with her on a personal basis report that she has become increasingly intolerant of dissent or failure, and ever more autocratic.

But even this development produced little more than an

extra decibel or two to the underlying rumble of complaint that is the background to most administrations. Indeed, the background level of grumbling in the Heath years was at least as audible. But a complete change of decibel level has taken place in the past few weeks, and it can be traced with some precision to a particular event. It was, according to several of Mrs Thatcher's colleagues, her triumphant return from Washington last month which produced the transformation.

Since then, say ministers, civil servants and backbenchers who have had direct dealings with Mrs Thatcher, her mood has radically altered. She has become fired with an almost messianic belief in what might be called The American Dream, and its transferability to the British situation. And she has made it clear that she will tolerate no hesitation, foot-dragging or dissent in making the transfer a reality.

The full extent of the change only became clear to her Cabinet colleagues during a couple of luncheon parties at 10 Downing Street recently, when she is reported to have harangued

departmental ministers individually on the successes of the Reagan Administration in their prime ministerial fields. But the Prime Minister's new transcendent enthusiasm has not stopped there, and she is reported to be conducting her discussions with civil servants as well as ministers at a new level of brink "presidential" authoritarianism. She has made it clear that she has a mission, and that she intends to carry it out.

Some surviving Keynesians in her government have been heard to express regret that Mrs Thatcher does not seem to have drawn the main lesson from the current success of Reaganomics, Mark II — namely, the crucial role of deficit finance.

But the main anxiety of the pragmatic majority is that Mrs Thatcher's promise of another two years of hard labour may well lead (as one of them put it this week) to five years of hard labour. They know that the privately commissioned polls of Tory support are now conveying a much more alarming message for the Government than emerges from the published versions. And that, after all, is what makes the Conservative Party tick.

THE BUDGET—Three economists from different schools of thought offer their prescriptions

A three-way bet to boost growth

Meghnad Desai

THE BUDGET should address itself to three objectives: reduce unemployment, reduce poverty and restructure the economy. The first two objectives are immediate and urgent. Restructuring the economy can only be thought of in the context of a Medium Term Industrial Strategy.

Politically and economically, this is a most opportune moment for launching a sustained expansion of the economy. Opinion polls indicate that unemployment is thought to be the number one economic problem by an overwhelming majority of the electorate. There is a consensus among the CBI, the TUC and NEDDO about the outlines of an expansionary investment package.

The economy witnessed a PSBR of £10 billion in 1984/85, £1.5 billion above target, partly no doubt due to the £3 billion that the miners' strike cost. Thus we have evidence that PSBR targets can be exceeded (as they have been in the last six years) without setting off an inflationary spiral, or raising interest rates. The present high interest rates are due to the middle over an exchange rate policy, not the PSBR.

There are also other signs that resources are available to finance an expansion. Local authorities have a financial surplus of £10 billion obtained from council house sales. The company sector has an investible surplus of £10 billion. There is no danger of "crowding out."

To cut unemployment down by 1.5 million over five years, 2.5 million jobs need to be created. To achieve this, the economy has to grow at around 5 per cent per annum over the next five years on average. It is not unknown for the economy to grow at such rapid rates in short bursts. The much maligned Mr Barber achieved a real GDP growth of 7 per cent in 1973/74.

There are two barriers that such a rapid growth programme would face—the balance of payments and inflation. Thanks to North Sea oil, the balance of payments constraint is not as acute now as it was in 1973. At least in the next few years, this is not a serious worry.

The second serious worry is inflation. To run an economy at above its long run growth is bound to create

pressures, though even here there are a number of favourable factors operating. The present rate of inflation is low although input prices are already rising sharply. But even so inflationary pressures can be contained by phasing the expansion carefully and by having an incomes policy.

Phasing the expansion implies that immediate increases in investment will go to those sectors which use relatively unskilled labour. Infrastructural investments are now on everyone's priority list. These activities are not only intensive in unskilled labour but they are also regionally spread. Not only will the benefits spread over the country as a whole but also no bottlenecks of labour supply need be created.

Incomes policies have been economically more effective than is commonly thought. The inflation rate did come down from nearly 25 per cent in 1975 to less than 8 per cent in 1978, with only a moderate increase in unemployment thanks to an incomes policy.

There has to be an incomes policy as a part and parcel of the medium run economic strategy. It has to be announced at the outset for five years and implemented in the context of an accelerated recovery. This way it will have some chance of success. As household incomes will be rising due to the pressure for real wage growth should be that much lower.

Job creation is not enough to tackle the problem of poverty. Single parent families and old age people constitute a large part of the poor. But women are also a group economically vulnerable. They are often in part-time, low paid jobs and expansionary programmes may not benefit them.

A long run plan would be to have a basic income guarantee for all persons of voting age. This would entitle each person to a certain amount of money which they could draw automatically with a cash card. Given the many estimates of the poverty line available, a level of twice the current SB rate for a single person would be a reasonable starting point. Everyone would be deemed to have drawn the sum and it would be added to their earnings income (if any) for tax purposes.

Such a programme would need to be financed out of

additional taxes but as the LWT Broadline Britain poll showed there is widespread support for it. Child benefits have to increase in real value as they are the best way to alleviate child poverty and to tackle the uneven distribution of resources within the household. An immediate increase of £3 is suggested but the long run aim should be to tie them back to the real cost of bringing children up.

Restructuring of the economy is the final objective. This requires changing the product mix we make as well as encouraging new forms of economic organisations. To make the transition to a higher proportion of products which are information and R & D intensive and away from the already declining industries will require a planned investment programme for expansion of educational and training facilities.

The British record in basic research and invention is outstanding. It is in the commercial exploitation of inventions that British companies fall behind. Since both private corporate management and nationalised industries leave something to be desired, it is a priority of any tax policy to subsidise new ways of economic organisation — co-operative, worker owned or managed, community owned, municipal. These forms need tax holidays to compete against more established forms.

How much will such a programme cost? A generous estimate is that the net cost of a job is £4,000. Over five years, 2.5 million jobs would cost £10 billion. In the first year, given the present low capacity levels, I would go for a million extra jobs at a net cost of between £4 and £5 billion.

The extra money on education, arts etc. can be put at another £2 billion. The net impact of extra child benefits will be around £2 billion. The big unknown is the basic income guarantee since it will replace some existing benefits but will also alter tax revenues.

How much will this add to the PSBR? Though much play can be made with numbers, the only point to flagging is that the PSBR figure seems to be that then we know by how much we have overrun it. This has happened in five of the last six years. Why bother?

Meghnad Desai is professor of economics at the London School of Economics.



Photomontage by Peter Kennard

Choice cuts—inflation or unemployment?

Alan Budd

THE Government's economic objectives are the control of inflation (leading ultimately to price stability) and the improvement of Britain's economic performance, which should include a fall in unemployment. We know from his Mait Lecture last June that Mr Lawson intends to use macro-economic policy (including the size of the PSBR) to control inflation and micro-economic policy, including tax reform, to encourage economic growth and higher employment.

On the question of inflation it is, incidentally, important for the government to announce clearly what its objective is. There is a great deal of difference between the policy requirement of holding inflation at about its current rate and getting rid of it completely. Also those making long-term financial contracts, whether to borrow or lend, need a better idea of what inflation rate to expect.

Mr Lawson announced his approach to economic policy as the reversal of a previous tradition. I think that his approach is not so much based on new ideas about how the economy works (though he does implicitly reject the view that demand policy making until 1978) as on a change in priorities. Macro-economic policy — for example tax cuts and public expenditure increases — can be used to increase output and cut unemployment but its use has longer term costs in terms of higher inflation. These costs will come more rapidly and the benefits will be smaller if the economy is operating close to full capacity.

Similarly, micro-economic policy can be used to cut inflation, for example through increases in subsidies or cuts in indirect taxation, but the result is temporary.

The problem of choice, in the short term between cutting inflation and cutting unemployment should be well recognised, and cannot be avoided. But there is also a dilemma which is less well recognised, in relation to the choice of micro-economic policies. Mr Lawson seeks fiscal neutrality and does not want to add to tax distortions. He also wants the labour market to behave more like a competitive market so that the rate of unemployment will be a reduction in the level of, or at least the growth of, real wages. But

experience since 1979 has shown that the labour market has little in common with competitive markets.

While there are millions who would willingly accept work at the current level of wages, those who are lucky enough to have jobs continue to get healthy increases in real wages, even in manufacturing, where employment has fallen by over 25 per cent since 1979. The most effective way of reducing unemployment in the short term may be to increase tax distortions and subsidies although the long-term effects of such policies may be unfavourable both for output and employment.

Thus Mr Lawson has to select Budget measures which not only balance the potential conflicts between cutting inflation and cutting unemployment but also those between cutting unemployment and improving our long-term economic performance.

I believe that the objective of cutting inflation further requires a path for fiscal policy close to that set out for the Medium Term Financial Strategy in last year's Budget. It is true that no-one knows precisely what the correct figure for the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement should be to the nearest billion pounds or so. £8 billion may be more sensible than £7 billion even if the Government leaves the path for money supply unchanged. But in my view the credibility of the policy does require that the Government sticks to the £8 billion figure it announced last year.

There have been suggestions that Mr Lawson should use the windfall from the higher sterling price of North Sea oil to reduce the PSBR by £2 billion or less. I think the more sensible proposal is to take North Sea Oil Revenue out of the budget completely. Higher oil prices are likely to depress demand and it is reasonable to compensate by distributing an equivalent "oil dividend" which is identified as such.

However this should happen as a separate exercise; it should not be part of the budget partly because it is dishonest (the Government should not be able to claim credit for tax cuts which are due to a windfall rise in the dollar) and partly because it is risky; the sterling price of oil can fall as well as rise. In addition, governments will have an uncomfortable time raising taxes or cutting public expenditure in later years as the oil revenue falls.

Budgetary policy cannot make a useful contribution to a strategy of this kind whilst at the same time maintaining the degree of fiscal restraint to which the Government is committed. That commitment should now be modified in the light of what has happened in the interest rates and to unemployment since it was made.

Andrew Brittan is the director of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research.

Can a budget for price stability also be a budget for jobs? On the assumption that Mr Lawson can make a net cut in taxes of £1.1 billion while keeping the PSBR to £7 billion, what measures will have the greatest impact on unemployment? The debate about public spending versus tax cuts is confused because the two sides are using different arguments.

In terms of the effect on demand in the short term, the Opposition is probably right to support increases in public spending in terms of the effect on supply in the longer term the Government is probably right to support tax cuts. (Though it is no doubt true that there are some public sector projects which are worth adopting and some of which are worth cancelling.)

The Government has rejected the use of a general expansion of demand to cut unemployment. But the problem with micro-economic policy changes to cut unemployment is that those which are designed to increase efficiency are likely only to affect employment in the longer term. If Mr Lawson wants rapid effects he will have to introduce measures which recognise that the labour market works inefficiently. This may mean paying subsidies for certain kinds of employment.

This is Mr Lawson's dilemma. He has to decide whether it is worth accepting some loss of efficiency to achieve a fall in unemployment, particularly among groups where it is high and persistent. There is one distortion which is well worth removing, namely the current system of National Insurance Contributions which, as a form of income tax (which in effect it is), has precisely the wrong properties.

On the general strategy Mr Lawson should not be tempted to compromise the Government's success in cutting inflation; a general expansion of demand at a time when output is already growing heavily and is expected to rise by a further 3½ per cent this year is a risky and ineffective way of cutting unemployment. But on special measures to cut unemployment it is worth taking some risks. The emphasis on "real" jobs is a worthy one but for those who have been out of work since 1979, an unreal job is better than no job at all.

Professor Alan Budd is Director of the Centre for Economic Forecasting at the London Business School.

Wanted—high productivity, high-pay, full-time, skilled jobs In-House briefing

Andrew Brittan

THIS YEAR a "Budget for Jobs" is what everyone wants. There is a clear public awareness that ever that unemployment is the central economic issue. Each time the output or the employment statistics get revised up it is tempting to cheer and to congratulate the British economy on its hidden reserves of strength. But then one remembers that the unemployment numbers themselves are not being revised down. We have some resources that we did not know about. But unemployment represents a much greater waste of resources and one we have always known about, only too well.

The aim should not be just to stop unemployment rising or just to get a small fall in unemployment in time for the next election. The aim

should be to end the decade with a lower level of unemployment than we started it. To achieve this requires not just one budget for jobs this year but a sequence of major policy measures over a sustained period.

The task is a formidable one, requiring action on many fronts. Although government action and leadership is essential it is not a problem which government action on its own can solve. Both employers and unions should give priority to the creation or preservation of jobs rather than higher pay or higher profits.

That means adopting business strategies based on high productivity but also on a high level of output. The defensive strategies adopted in the recession and still operating now may raise productivity but they do so by cutting output. This may seem sensible from the point of view of the individual firms but it

could be disastrous for the country as a whole.

There is sadly not much evidence that concern about the level of unemployment is so widely voiced as a political issue, has made much difference to the way in which pay negotiations are conducted, or production decisions are taken. This makes the task of the Government, if it is determined to reverse the rise in unemployment, much more difficult.

Many of the jobs we have lost since the end of the Seventies were in manufacturing industry. They were in the main what are sometimes called "real jobs."

In the industries that contracted the easiest way to deal with job losses was to stop recruitment and encourage early retirement. As a result we have a special problem of youth unemployment and an extraordinary fall in activity rates for men in their fifties. These facts

provide some clue to the kinds of jobs it is most important to create.

I do not mean that we should try to put the clock back. We cannot reverse the rise in unemployment simply by recreating the jobs that were lost, in the same industries and occupations. Obviously the jobs created now should fit the patterns of demand and technology of the late Eighties not those of the Seventies. But the jobs created should have some of the characteristics of the jobs lost.

They should include jobs in activities which compete internationally, since the country as a whole has to pay for its imports and that need is becoming more pressing as oil production stops rising. They should include high productivity jobs unless we are content to see our standard of living decline. They should include jobs with high enough pay to enable a man in middle life

to support a family. They should include jobs with a high skill content and jobs which require years of vocational training.

The economy has now recovered from the worst of the recession and the latest figures show that the employed labour force rose by 480,000 between March 1983 and September 1984. But the jobs that are being created are quite different from the jobs lost in the recession. A large number (318,000), it now appears, are in semi-employment. Their output is very imperfectly measured and could be very low. 162,000 extra jobs were also created for employees over the same 18 months, but many of those are only part-time and have been taken by married women who are new entrants to the labour force, not by school-leavers or the registered unemployed.

An increase in the threshold of income tax as part of a Budget for Jobs might create

some more jobs of the same kind. It would, other things being equal, a little to aggregate demand and hence to output generally, but that is not a characteristic that distinguishes it from other measures which cut taxation or raise public spending. Indeed in terms of demand effect per pound added to the PSBR it is not an efficient measure to take at all.

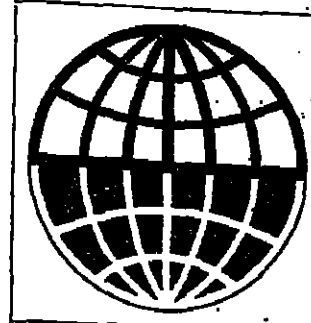
The merit claimed for it is rather that it will be a "supply-side" measure and will create jobs at rates of pay close to the current pay threshold which no-one would be willing to take if they had to pay the current rates of tax. Many of these jobs would be for part-timers; few, one suspects, would be very productive. There may also be some extra public spending to create low paid and unskilled jobs in the public sector.

A Budget of this kind would certainly deserve some applause, especially if it is

designed so as to help the longer-term unemployed. But this approach to the problem of unemployment on its own is not enough. The jobs we most need are high-productivity, high-pay, full-time and skilled. The loudest argument, therefore, should be reserved for an economic strategy that would enable the whole labour force and especially those now unemployed to contribute their full potential to the prosperity of the country.

On Wednesday the Liberal peer Lord Wigoder, initiates a televised debate demanding the repeal of the Official Secrets Act.

Colin Brown



THIRD COLUMN

Word play

THE West was shocked a few weeks ago when Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko told the Supreme Soviet that what he described as "Western imperialism" should be resisted with Soviet aid "directly on the ground." He went on to comment pointedly that "the aspiration for socialism" would not be so easy to suppress in El Salvador, Pakistan, Thailand, or Sudan. The new Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Sokolov, echoed Mr Gromyko the same day, calling for "a powerful military hand within the glove of diplomacy."

At least the West would have been shocked if these statements had actually been made. In reality they were uttered on January 31 before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee by Mr Shultz and Mr Weinberger, causing rather less of a stir. (It was of course, the "Soviet geopolitical encroachments" which, according to Mr Shultz, should be resisted "in one way or another" with US aid, particularly in "Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, and elsewhere in Africa.")

It used to be said that the real story of the Vietnam war was revealed in the New York Times and Washington Post long before the Pentagon Papers were ever published. If only one had time to read all the cuttings including the one from page 57. Nor have these latest statements gone unreported, but it is left to us to supply the context.

The Washington Post did publish a careful analysis by Don Oberdorfer of how Mr Shultz "seemed to approve a broad charter for covert US actions against the Soviets." And Doyle McManus wrote in the Los Angeles Times that the two US officials "appeared to agree on the use of military force in the Third World."

Yet the public image of US foreign policy in the West is largely unaffected by statements which cause alarm in the Third World. If uttered on the Soviet side, such words would suffice to perpetuate the image of Soviet actions in a ready alarm colour. On the American side, words on the whole are perceived just as words.

The process of rationalisation is complicated. It is partly because we are placed to view at close hand the hesitations and ambiguities in American than in Soviet foreign policy-making. Nor have Soviet diplomats yet mastered the art of using background briefings to blunt the edge of their leaders' pronouncements. True, American propaganda is looser and less formalistic, so that a particular word or phrase may mean less unless reiterated.

In the build-up to this week's Geneva talks, Mr Reagan and his team have uttered thousands of words on the subject of Star Wars. They have been properly and fully reported, and yet their most significant feature has been treated more as rhetoric than as a real threat.

This is the determination of Mr Reagan — and of the defence establishment — will outlive the shift in policy (not just research) a "strategic defence" capability regardless of Soviet objections. American officials agree that this allowed by the existing ABM treaty. But the "negotiations" before deployment which Mr Reagan appeared to concede in his Christmas agreement with the Russians are not real negotiations at all. They are quite clearly and consistently presented as nothing more than an exercise in the exercise of the exercise that Star Wars is good for them.

Their purpose, said Mr Reagan on February 12, was merely "to make sure that they (the Russians) understand that we weren't trying to create the ability of a first strike ourselves," and thus to "eliminate" the threat. The actual Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Mr Kenneth Adelman, also chose his words carefully, explaining that "should there be any systems in the defensive realm, we would have to go back to the Soviet Union and work closely with them."

One can just imagine what a friendly scene it would be. "Hi, folks, we're gonna deploy Star Wars. Now don't worry about it, and have a nice day." How differently it would be presented if it was the Russians who had a new magic weapon which they positively insisted must be deployed to make us feel safer in our beds. The middle words for it then would be blackmail.

John Gittings

Debt problems and political unrest mark the democracies of Panama and the Dominican Republic, reports Jonathan Steele

The smaller they come, the harder it hurts

FOUR years after the death of the overwhelmingly popular General Omar Torrijos, Panama's first elected President for a decade and a half, Nicolas Ardito Barletta is facing a rising tide of political unrest.

Across the Caribbean, as another small democracy, the Dominican Republic, played host last month to finance and foreign ministers from the ten major Latin American debtors, President Jorge Blanco's main worry was to prevent a national protest from shutting down the country.

Each in its own way, these two Latin American democracies reflect the predicament of the region's smaller economies, which have been hit harder by the debt crisis, the collapse in value of their export crops, and the industrial world's recession than their larger and more publicised fellow-debtors such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. The fact that they are both run by parties called "revolutionary" is more ironic.

The similarities do not end there. Each country has had its fling of anti-American nationalism: in the Dominican Republic it was defeated when the United States Marines invaded the island 20 years ago next month; in Panama it was absorbed when the United States got the best of the Canal treaty negotiations. Now both countries have governments that are friendly and close to Washington, but it has not solved their economic problems.

Both countries, too, have enjoyed two decades of relative political stability in contrast with their neighbours. The Dominican Republic shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, while the latter's record is one of the worst in the Caribbean. But since the assassination of its own dictator, Rafael Trujillo, 50 years ago, the Dominican Republic has become — at least until recently — a place of unusual civic calm, without the brutality of Haiti to the west or the street violence and criminality of Puerto Rico to the east.

Panama, too, under the benevolent regime of Torrijos has been a very different type of army rule from that of the rest of Central America, nor have its rural problems produced the guerrilla movements of Nicaragua and El Salvador to the north or Colombia to the south. All that is changing now. In Panama a new verb has been coined as people fear that the may be Central Americanised: the "dominicanisation" of the government has started to detain scores of politicians and trade union leaders without charge, albeit still only for short periods.



Barletta: the soft-spoken technocrat

PANAMA

- 2.1 million people. Per capita income US\$2,086
- Foreign debt US\$3,500 millions (1984)
- Estimated servicing US\$640 millions (1983)
- Debt servicing as percentage of exports: 35 per cent
- Main exports: bananas, shrimps, sugar, plus banking services

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

- 6.0 million people. Per capita income US\$1,358
- Foreign debt US\$2,850 (1984)
- Estimated servicing US\$371 millions (1983)
- Debt servicing as percentage of exports: 46 per cent
- Main exports: sugar, gold alloy, coffee, ferronickel

In Panama, government officials speak nostalgically of Torrijos, and some even suggest that his death in a plane crash in 1981 came at the right time, at least for his place in history. It was then that the second big crisis in world oil prices struck, and the banks contracted on new lending. Sugar and banana prices tumbled.

With two million people, Panama has a debt of \$3.5 billion, one of the highest per capita burdens in the world. Over the last three years it has had a balance of trade deficit of almost one billion dollars annually. Now its effort to get some of this debt rescheduled and receive an IMF standby depends on putting an austerity package into force before the end of March.

Panama is worried that it will get less favourable terms than the larger Latin American debtors who have more political muscle. It has also found it harder to take advantage of the recovery of the US economy.

For President Barletta, a former Vice-President of the World Bank, who once served as Torrijos' planning minister, the crisis is a double one: political as well as economic. He was strongly backed by the United States in the elections last May, but only squeaked into power by a narrow margin in a poll which many diplomats as well as the opposition believe was rigged.

Anxious to gain legitimacy through his record in office, Mr Barletta has had little success so far. A soft-spoken technocrat, he has lost support in the three communities who originally supported him, according to diplomats: the armed forces, the business community, and within his own party. In November he brought in a programme of tax increases and a wage freeze, then after street demonstrations, withdrew it a few days later.

In a recent interview Mr Barletta conceded that there should have been "wider consultation" in advance, but said that the only way out of the country's problems was to curb the public sector, attract foreign investment and reactivate private business, particularly in construction, agriculture and tourism.

Mr Barletta praises Torrijos for "strengthening Panama's independence, building a tradition of strong popular participation, and developing the entire country," and says he is following the same line. But critics argue that Mr Barletta's policies are no longer "Torrijista," and this explains the political alienation of many urban and rural workers, and the petty-bourgeoisie.

Now there are rumours of a possible new coup with the head of the defence forces,

General Manuel Antonio Noriega, either taking over or finding another civilian if Mr Barletta does not soon increase his political authority.

In the Dominican Republic there is little chance of a military coup, but the ruling PRD party will have a hard task to win next year's election, which is now the President who was the Americans' bugbear in the national days of the early 1960s, has long since broken with the party, and founded a new one. Opinion polls give him a higher rating than the PRD's most likely candidate, the dynamic Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, who has been trying hard to distance himself from the present PRD government.

But the favourite, if he decides to run again, is the veteran leader of the Partido Reformista, Joaquin Balaguer, already three times President. Whoever wins will



face a daunting economic agenda.

As in Panama, the President recently announced an austerity programme with increases in the price of food and fuel, but then withdrew it after a national shutdown in which middle-class shopkeepers joined with trade unions. Riots over food prices last year were fuelled when the army shot at least 100 people. The outburst, and the official reaction stunned and shocked Dominicans, and this year there was less violence. But the government detained leftwing leaders, put a heavy police and army presence on the streets, and then gave in to the protesters' demands.

Low prices for sugar and ferronickel have made it impossible for the country to generate enough earnings to finance its debt. An IMF programme begun in 1983 cut government spending and investment, but failed to curb imports, and now the government has announced a massive devaluation. It is negotiating a new standby loan with the IMF but this depends on Congress passing an austerity budget designed to curb the deficit.

The US sees the country as a democracy and has cushioned the blow by large amounts of bilateral aid, US\$180 million this year up from US\$100 million last year. If it were not for tourism, which is now the government's mainstay because of the very low peso, making the island one of the cheapest in the Caribbean, and the funds sent back by the roughly 800,000 Dominicans living abroad, the country would have foundered by now.

Like Panama, the Dominican Republic has learnt the hard way how risky it is to rely on an economic strategy based on export-led growth and international borrowing. Foreign investors are fair weather friends and when bad weather strikes, the smallest economies which suffer the most.

NAMIBIA

Call to the gun

Tony Weaver on the mounting opposition to conscription

THE guerrilla war in Namibia is now in its 19th year, and for the first time, church and political leaders are warning the conflict "could develop into a fully-fledged civil war. South Africa, which has occupied Namibia since 1966 — its de facto occupation since the end of 1948 — has legislated universal conscription for all Namibians.

Although a limited call-up has existed since 1980, it is only this year that the call-up is being implemented in a thorough fashion. Until late last year the war against SWAPO was largely being fought by South African conscripts, permanent force members, and police paramilitary units.

But in keeping with South African attempts to "Namibianise" the political and military struggle, and controversy surrounding the territory's future, conscription now applies to all males between the ages of 18 and 55 who live in the territory.

The first serious challenge to the system came late in 1983, in a supreme court hearing which stretched into last year. Erick Binga, a 21-year-old card-carrying member of SWAPO, was conscripted for military training at the Walvis Bay infantry training school. But he refused to go, and challenged the South African authorities in court.

He argued that because South Africa's occupation of Namibia was illegal, the country had no right to conscript him into the army. He added that his brother had fled the country, and was more than likely a trained SWAPO guerrilla. "I am not prepared to fight against my brothers and sister in the struggle for liberation," he said.

He lost his case, and is appealing, but his challenge to the system on the issue and slowly, mobilisation against conscription is gaining momentum. Even so, the options for the future are limited. While anti-South African political parties have — in defiance of the law —

called for mass mobilisation against conscription, options open to ordinary citizens are limited: either skip the country and join the 100,000 Namibians already in exile, or go into the army for a two-year compulsory period.

Now, with the economy in tatters, and unemployment spiralling, white bosses in factories and on farms are giving their workers the choice of conscription or the sack. With almost no trade union structure, the workers have little choice but to register for conscription or face starvation.

Among the parties urging total resistance to conscription are SWAPO, the South West Africa National Union, the Independence Party, the Christian Democratic Party, the Mbanderu Council, and a less strident note, the Damara Council. All have warned that the universal conscription legislation contains the seeds of civil war, and have stated they refuse to fight against their own people in a war imposed upon them.

The Mbanderu Council, a militant party and aligned to SWAPO, delivered an outright challenge to South Africa. "Start building extra goals for Mbanderu sons," they warned in a statement, "because Mbanderu sons will go into the South African army to fight against their fellow-Namibians who are waging the liberation struggle."

Yet resistance to call-up has not daunted the South African authorities. Lieut-Gen George Melting, a seconded South African officer, commanding the South West Africa Territory Force, recently stated that SWAPO office-bearers will have to register or face prosecution.

Most vocal in the wave of protest against conscription have been the Namibian churches. The Council of Churches in Namibia has repeatedly warned that South African policies are pushing the territory closer to full-scale civil war.

In a recent interview, General Melting said he foresaw no problems in integrating a post-independent SWAPO with SWAPO guerrilla fighters, "because a post-independence government will not be Marxist, and therefore they will not accept SWAPO terrorists into the ranks."

He admitted that there had been problems with SWAPO members being called up and inducting the SWAPO, but denied this was a major problem.



The South African Army dog squad goes through its paces

BOOKS

Land of sorrow

Victoria Brittain reviews two books on Ethiopia

THE SUFFERING and deaths of the Ethiopian famine compares with the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — an unforgettable scar on the conscience of the West. Graham Hancock's timely and modest book, *The Challenge of Gaolanz* (23.95), will describe the roots of this catastrophe which need never have overwhelmed millions of Ethiopian peasant families.

Hancock, a former journalist, who travelled extensively in Ethiopia both before and during the drought, gaols before describing the landscape and characters of Hieronymus Bosch, which was Makalle, capital of Tigray province, late last year.

He quotes Mohamed Amin, the Kenyan journalist who shot the BBC film which roused the world's sympathy: "there was this tremendous mass of people, groaning and weeping, scattered across the ground in the dawn mist... as if a hundred jumbo jets had crashed and spilled out the bodies of their passengers among the wreckage, the dead and the living mixed together so you couldn't tell one from the other."

Using Richard Pankhurst's research, Hancock describes the 23 major famines of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and then those better remembered such as the one ten years ago which brought the end of Imperial rule in Addis Ababa. Bad government and drought have been a deadly combination in Ethiopia for generations.

Using public documents issued by the Derg, he shows how since 1981 the Ethiopian government forecast the disaster and asked the West for grain which was not sent. Western governments condemned Ethiopia to be the recipient of the smallest per capita development aid allocation in the world, although it is one of the poorest. But Hancock is no partisan ideologue and he criticises the Soviet Union as roundly as he does the West. The Ethiopian government's huge expenditure on Soviet military weapons to fight the old war in Eritrea and a new one in Tigre has doomed the country's long-term development, particularly of agriculture.

Impressive social development in spite of 23 years of war is the theme of Never Kneel Down (Spokesman, 24.95). James Firebrace's useful book on Eritrea, Firebrace, who is War on Want's programme officer for the Horn of Africa, has long been a vocal supporter of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front. The book has an excellent annex of documents illustrating Eritrea's historical right to independence.

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LETTERS

Island troubles

Sir — Your article "Army Offensive" (March 1) highlights one of the main obstacles to any peaceful settlement of the Sri Lankan crisis — the implacable enmity of the Buddhist clergy to the largely Hindu Tamil population on the island and the subservience of the Government to a militant, extremist priesthood.

This priesthood has been largely responsible for the fanatic Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism that portrays the Sinhalese as a superior race descended from pure Aryan stock.

Guerrilla activity originally arose as a result of the excesses of this Sinhalese army that has occupied the Tamil homelands since 1977. It would cease overnight if that army were withdrawn.

In recent months there has been a further sinister development. In its obsessive overreaction to guerrilla activity the army is systematically clearing villages and destroying crops, intent on turning large areas of the Tamil homelands into desert to deprive the "terrorists" of cover. Wide belts of coastal territory have been declared prohibited zones and the fishing communities uprooted, creating an enormous refugee problem overnight.

One of the most disturbing features of the whole situation is the indifference of the outside world.

Dr R. Nithiyasanthan, 179 Norval Road, North Wembley, Middlesex.

Sir — With reference to "Aiding a Hindu Tiger" (February 15), Mr Zia Masani, the views expressed are not only distorted but represent the kind of irresponsible and mischievous writing calculated to damage the secular fabric of India.

The recent elections have proved beyond doubt that electors on the sub-continent across considerations of party, region and religion on a national basis, for the integrity and unity of India.

Secondly, Mr Masani got the name of the Congress MP wrong — it is Mr H. K. L. Bhagat and not Ghagat.

F. Rege, High Commissioner of India, London WC2.

NORTH/SOUTH

The voice of Africa

AFRICAN senior statesman, President J. Nyerere of Tanzania, chairman of the Organisation of African Unity and of the Frontline States, makes a rare visit to London

next week. It will be his last as Head of State. Later this year Malawi, (teacher), as he is always called in Africa, steps down as President though he will remain leader of the Party.

The visit could hardly come at a more opportune moment when there is unprecedented public interest in Africa and a growing sympathy for the concerns which for years Nyerere has been voicing to deal with in Western capitals.

Import costs rise rapidly. Nyerere has led African governments' attempts (largely unsuccessful) to resist standard IMF prescriptions of belt-tightening and has described the fund as "the best weapon the rich have."

Unanimously elected chairman of the OAU in Addis Ababa last November, he focused future debate on the continent's economic crisis and the fundamental causes in the world recession with its high interest rates, negative capital transfers to the Third World, and worsening terms of trade.

Agricultural self-sufficiency in Africa remains his great preoccupation, and characteristically, he has asked for one day of his visit to be spent with Tanzanian students at Reading University's agricultural department.

Class war

NOT content, apparently, with trading casualties in southern Lebanon, the Israelis have decided — once again — to close down the New Campus of

Birzeit University. The closure order came after the Israeli army had raided a book exhibition at the university, claiming in the process to have found illegal literature, including manuals on how to make Molotov cocktails and the like. Over 50 students were detained, with nine still held a week later.

Friends of "civil liberties and academic freedom" are urged to protest to the nearest Israeli Ambassador or the Israeli Ministry of Defence in Tel-Aviv.

Victoria Brittain, Third World Review editor

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Roll up, roll up, you foreigners—buy your British assets while they last



NOTEBOOK

Edited by
Hamish McRae

MR TEBBIT was goaded. The decision not to refer the Al-Fayed bid for House of Fra-

ser is wrong, as it is likely to become increasingly apparent in the coming months. It is the prerogative of the incumbent minister to make mistakes, but this will in the fullness of time look a real stinker.

The reasons why there should have been a reference were set out here earlier this week and need no repetition. What is worth exploring is the new and narrow focus that this "case law" seems to give to government policy on competition.

Essentially, there are two types of reason why the Government, any government, should seek to intervene in the market's decisions about the ownership of large public companies.

One clear duty is to make sure that the market allocates the ownership of companies in such a way as to

ensure adequate competition between them. The whole thrust of monopolies legislation indeed the very word itself, is concerned with this aspect of corporate behaviour.

The second duty is wider. It is to ensure that the ownership of large corporations is in what, for want of a better expression, might be called suitable hands. The objection to Lomho's ownership of Fraser was essentially that it was unsuitable. Or at least it was until yesterday. Yesterday, ironically, it was deemed acceptable.

There is some other "case law" on ownership. Neither Hong Kong and Shanghai, nor Standard Chartered, were deemed suitable owners of Royal Bank of Scotland. But this has its limitations. We are led to understand that a non-British bidder for one of the big four

would be welcome. But until that is actually tested no one knows. It is a rumour and nothing more, but if the current rumoured interested of Hong Kong and Shanghai in Midland were to prove correct, under what circumstances would a bid be allowed to go ahead? The case law is, at best, inadequate, at worst contradictory.

You could point to other areas of sensitivity: newspapers, for example. But the central issue is to what extent large British public companies should be perceived as national assets, with the community as a whole having a say in their ownership?

Just suppose that someone like the Sultan of Brunei popped in a bid for Barclays in a couple of years' time. What would Mr Tebbit, or more likely his successor, say then?

Point at issue

NOW to another little local difficulty of Mr Tebbit. Labour's trade spokesman, Mr Brian Gould, has turned up an interesting point in his questions to Mr Tebbit about trading of British Telecom shares by Kleinwort Benson employees on their own accounts.

We will not know the answers until early next week, said Kleinwort — which has terminated the issue — keeping its head down on the grounds that it is up to Mr Tebbit to reply.

There are no rules restricting employees of banks and brokers who want to apply for and trade shares in new issues handled by their own firms. The Stock Exchange does have a restriction in the case of initial

share placings where brokers' staff and families are forbidden to take any shares, to prevent abuses in pricing or allocation.

But in full scale public issues the exchange leaves brokers to decide their own rules, with the result that there are a wide range of in-house instructions on what can and cannot be applied for, issues, what they do with the shares if they get them, and when they can sell.

The same applies to merchant banks, which also have varying in-house rules about potentially important matters, such as disclosure of private applications and deals to the bank management. Mr Tebbit may tell us something about Kleinwort's own rules.

The important point is not that people are unaware of potential conflicts but that there is no properly agreed standard of conduct. An

early case for the Securities and Investment Board?

Electronic deals

A GLIMPSE of the future global electronic securities market came yesterday from the Stock Exchange, Reuters and Instinet, the US firm which runs a computerised share pricing and trading system. Reuters is to market Instinet outside the US and the Stock Exchange is now discussing with the two of them the possibility of an international electronic trading network which may also include other European exchanges.

Instinet allows you to do instant share deals on a terminal, and although mainly dealing in US shares it already handles some British ones in the form of American Depositary Receipts (ADRs).

The London Stock Exchange has a strong interest in getting the new market under its wing, rather than see it develop as yet another rival outside the exchange. Instinet could have a powerful attraction in giving investors direct access to North American markets, including the ADRS.

It was incidentally the emergence of the ADR market in Britain which helped persuade people here that the London market had to restructure itself to compete internationally.

Instinet is mainly for small deals (although large blocks of shares can be negotiated), so it is quite different from the early London attempt to do an electronic trade, the unsuccessful Ariet system. The ability to do small international deals cheaply could bring the global market much nearer.

Tourism
'chance
for jobs'

By Michael Smith,
Industrial Editor

Many thousands of jobs could be created by boosting Britain's tourist industry through a sweeping reform of many archaic laws, according to a Conservative MP.

Mr Robert Banks, MP for Harrogate, says in a report out today that Britain's tourist industry offers one of the best opportunities for new job creation, but this cannot be exploited until the industry is freed from the many restrictions and negative attitudes which are hampering its natural development.

The report, entitled *New Jobs from Pleasure*, urges the government to give Lord Young, the Minister Without Portfolio, the job of coordinating the 11 departments concerned with Britain's tourist industry. It also calls for the abolition of Sunday trading laws, flexible licensing hours, new planning procedures, and the establishment of a College of Tourism.

Copies of the report have been sent to the Prime Minister and Mr Norman Lamont, the minister responsible for the tourist industry, and Mr Banks says there has been a "positive response".

The report emerges at a difficult time for the industry.

Tough time ahead for loss-making arms

Modest profit rise at
TI but shares soar

By Maggie Brown.

Engineering group TI warned yesterday that it is preparing tough action aimed at sorting out four loss-making operations which cost the company £16 million last year.

Head of the list for treatment is the Nottingham cycles manufacturer, Raleigh, employing 2,500 people but which is still £4.5 million in the red after four years of reorganisation. It now faces a freeze while its £11 million investment programme is re-examined.

Chairman Ronny Utiger yesterday announced pre-tax profits from the ailing industrial group of £19 million, slightly better than the gloomy City had been predicting but still well below the original hopes of £33 million of last summer.

The share price jumped 22p yesterday to 240p, on the news, reviving strong rumours that TI is being sized up by a potential predator, such as Hanson Trust.

Mr Utiger said: "I have no information that leads me to believe a bid is likely" and he pointed to the "solid purchasing" from institutional investors which took place during

the day led by Simon & Coates, Messels and Pamure Gordon. But this was viewed as an inadequate reason for such a strong price surge last night.

TI is facing setbacks in cold drawn steel tubes, machine tools and a US gas cylinders plant, as well as Raleigh. All four had been forecast to improve last year, but losses rose from £9 million to £16 million.

While the company had warned of Raleigh's troubles, reorganising the range of problems was a surprise. Cold Drawn Tubes is a company set up last March after agreed capacity reductions with British Steel in which TI holds the dominant 75 per cent stake.

Mr Utiger says TI has just reopened talks with BSC on its future which could lead to one of the two surviving joint plants at Corby or Broadwell, West Midlands being shut. The group employs 700 people. TI's share of losses were around £3.5 million last year and demand from traditional customers, engineering firms and power station contractors, remains poor.

It is also closing its US gas cylinders company and transferring manufacturing to the

UK, now a favoured manufacturing base because of the export opportunities presented by the weak pound. The machine tool operations have been placed under new management. They have been told to produce a tight business strategy by March. The business was heading back into profit at the end of 1983, but collapsed again in 1984.

The dividend for the year is unchanged at 10p. Mr Utiger is saying little about the way 1985 is expected to shape up, though Raleigh will still be in loss, while the UK cycle market it dominates will be marginally depressed.

The company's salvation, its domestic appliance side trading under such well-known product names as Creda, Russell Hobbs and New World was barely changed, producing £22.1 million of profit, though it faces a tougher High Street climate this year as mortgage rates climb. Turnover overall was £971.2 million, compared with £914.3 million. The City view is that TI's top management need to produce convincingly better results during 1985 to keep their institutional investors behind them.

Rowntree
puts
bite on
bidders

By Mary Brasier

ROWNTREE Mackintosh yesterday unwrapped 1984 figures which it hopes will put paid to any predators planning a takeover.

Profits are up 22 per cent to £74.5 million with the hard centre of the group's business moving further westward to North America which has contributed nearly a third of trading profits.

It is part of Rowntree's geographical and product shift, which has taken it into US cookie shops and potato crisps. Over half trading profits are now earned



Ken Dixon

abroad, and one fifth of sales — which passed the £1 billion mark — came from non-confectionery goods, such as savoury snacks.

Chairman Mr Kenneth Dixon said, "1984 was one more firm step along the competitive but rewarding road of combining growth with progressive improvement in the return on funds."

Rowntree is confident that it is in better shape to defend its independence. Rumours that foreign food groups are stalking Rowntree have flourished in the past year.

"Our share price is now well supported by earnings, but we have had no approaches and our share register shows that European nominee holdings add up to just 2.5 per cent of the company," said finance director Mr David Bowden.

Rowntree shares rose 7p to 395p yesterday. New companies acquired in the past two years have brought in an extra £276 million of sales, and Rowntree plans to go on expanding in the US. "Our acquisitions are adding bits at the edges," said Mr Bowden. "We shall not be making any leaps into unknown territory and we would tread warily into the area of the major food groups." The industry is currently battling it out particularly over sales of cookies.

Rowntree admits to losing up to 0.75 per cent of market share last year as Yorkie Bars and Arco bars went out against Cadbury's new Wispa bar.

Overall profits might have been even higher at £77.7 million for a change in the way the company translates the figures into sterling.

The dividend rose by 13 per cent to 11p.

BNOC abolition will
hit smaller firms

By John Hooper,
Energy Correspondent

The spot markets reacted calmly yesterday to the Government's decision to abolish the British National Oil Corporation. But there were signs that Opec member countries were none too pleased with the move and fears that it could give the multinational oil companies a significant advantage over the smaller British firms operating in the North Sea.

After a day of thin trading, the price of Britain's main Brent blend was 5 cents down at \$27.75.

There was no official reaction from Opec but senior oil officials in the Gulf said that Britain was abnegating her responsibilities.

The semi-official Emirates News linked the abolition of BNOC with Norway's refusal to let its production, saying that "the two major Western European producers wish to do nothing to help maintain price stability".

A spokesman for the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation said that Nigeria had never had any faith in BNOC's ability to sustain prices and he called for a stronger body to replace it.

In London, a spokesman for UK Offshore Operators Association said he had been surprised that the Government had made up its mind so quickly. But he added: "Our members would rather do their own pricing and I don't think

that they are going to shed many tears over BNOC's abolition."

The smaller companies, however, will lose money because of the move. Whereas the multinationals, which have their own refining operations, sell their production crude to BNOC and buy it back again at the same official price, the smaller firms — with only exploration and production interests — benefit handsomely from the arrangement whereby BNOC buys 51 per cent of their output at an official price higher than that which they could otherwise obtain on the spot market.

The existence of BNOC also relieved them of the chore of having to make cargoes out of their often modest output.

Code for investment adverts

By Margaret Dibben,
Money Editor

New rules governing the advertising of investments have been agreed between the building societies, banks and finance houses. They have drawn up a code of conduct setting out exactly how interest rates must be described.

The Bank of England and the Registry of Friendly Societies are behind this agreement which has been prompted by the banks' and finance houses' switch to Composite Rate Tax from April 6. The trade associations involved are concerned that customers will be able to compare interest rates accurately when all their members are paying interest to savers after deducting tax.

The common term to be used in advertisements will be "net" which, as now, is the rate paid after allowing for basic rate tax. This figure must be shown in all advertisements unless the information is aimed at overseas investors who are still entitled to receive bank interest without tax deducted.

Most advertisers will choose to show how much this rate is worth to a basic rate taxpayer and in future this must be called the "gross equivalent" which is the net rate plus 30 per cent allowed for tax.

The word "gross" can only be used on occasions when it must be paid without tax deducted. A fourth term, "Compounded Annual Rate" with the inevitable acronym CAR can be used in addition to any

of the foregoing three terms and will show the interest rate compounded to indicate what is actually paid in a year if interest is added more often than annually.

The Building Societies Association, British Bankers Association and Finance Houses Association will all indicate that their members comply with the new code and they also hope others will adopt the guide lines.

The "net" or "gross" figure will be the contractual rate of interest and in advertisements no other rate can be given more prominently. Other regulations in the code say that advertisements must say how frequently interest is paid and that rates are subject to variation and show withdrawal conditions.

Brokers poach retail
analysts from BHS

By Margaret Pagano,
City Correspondent

Capel-Cure Myers has poached two senior executives from British Home Stores to head its retail research team after the recent mass walk-out by its leading analysts. They are Mr Tim Wood, an associate director of BHS who has been in charge of corporate and financial planning, and his analyst colleague, Mr David Stoddart, CCM, is expected to announce the appointments to its clients today.

The appointments are seen as a coup for CCM, one of the City's leading stockbrokers, which was left stunned by the defection of its five-strong retail team in February. Led by Mr John Richards, they had been rivalled by Mr Wood Mackenzie, who are understood to have paid an extremely

high "golden hello" premium to take on the team. Wood Mackenzie has previously no specialist retail research team.

Under Mr Richards, CCM's team was a close second to Sprague's Kemp-Gee in the Continental Illinois league table ranking of specialist broking teams.

A third appointment to the new CCM team is Ms Nikki Adamson, formerly editor of Stores Equipment News. Mr David Reid, who has just resigned as finance director of International Stores, could move to Tesco. The supermarket giant, which recently took on Mr David Caulfield as managing director of retail operations from International, said talks had taken place but no agreement had been reached. Mr Reid resigned after Dee Corporation took control of International.

Iberia chairman sacked

The Spanish state airline Iberia announced yesterday it has sacked its chairman amid mounting controversy over finances and safety.

An airline spokesman said Mr Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros was sacked on Wednesday night by the parent state industrial holding INI and replaced by Mr Narcis Andreu, chairman of the Banco de Credito Local.

During Mr Espinosa's 14-month administration, Iberia was hit by a pilots' strike which lasted a month, a six-day walk-out by maintenance workers last summer and losses of \$70 million in 1984.

The dismissal came shortly after Mr Espinosa was involved in a public row with Mr Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros, whose departure was sacking in a magazine interview was obstructing his work.

Iberia is hoping to shore up losses by next year through a recovery plan calling for 900 layoffs in its 24,000-strong workforce and other belt-tightening measures. — Reuters.

Jopling in milk battle

By Rosemary Collins,
Agriculture Correspondent

The Government has decided to argue within the EEC that farmers should be allowed to lease milk production quotas, separate from the land to which they are allocated, but will refuse to try to win agreement to the sale of quota without its accompanying land.

The decision announced by the Agriculture Minister, Mr Michael Jopling, yesterday, comes after a heated row between the farmers' organisations, who want to be able to buy and sell quotas freely, and the landowners' organisations, including county councils, who have favoured a leasing system which would leave the capital

value of quotas tied to individual farms.

At present leasing and sale of quota is only allowed by the EEC provided that the land is leased or sold, too, and that roughly no more than 20,000 litres of milk quota goes with each hectare of land.

Mr Jopling maintains that he is not siding with the landowners' lobby in deciding to fight for a leasing system, but is only taking note of political reality.

There is strenuous opposition within the council of EEC farm ministers to the sale of quotas without land, because of fears that it would depopulate rural areas and hit rural employment prospects where

farms are left without quota, and where the land is unsuitable for crop cultivation. There will be opposition to the leasing of quotas, too, but Mr Jopling calculates that this will be less intense. Either scheme would require new legislation, but in the case of quota sales, it would have to be primary legislation which might take up to two years to be enacted and implemented.

Leasing could be introduced more quickly, given EEC approval and could speed the distribution of quota from farmers who have more than they need to those suffering hardship because they have too little. The Ministry of Agriculture believes.

NEWS
IN BRIEF

THE sacking last year of Professor Gordon Dickson, chairman of the Agricultural Wages Board, allegedly because of pressure brought to bear by the National Farmers' Union on the Ministry of Agriculture, has "dealt a mortal blow to the supposedly independent status of the board and in particular its chairman," the Labour Party farming spokesman, Brynnon John, said yesterday.

Professor Dickson was regarded by the NFU as pro-worker, and the union admits that it criticised him both publicly and privately, but denies making any formal request for his removal.

The Chancellor could embark on more useful public spending without breaching his £7 billion borrowing target for next year by the device of bringing forward tax revenues, Mr Ian Wigglesworth, the SDP's economic spokesman said yesterday. Mr Wigglesworth argued that the Chancellor had indulged in a deliberate attempt to talk down expectations of Tuesday's budget in recent weeks so that he could make a bigger impact.

FRENCH car maker, Peugeot is to invest £54 million in a new pick-up truck and estate car manufacturing plant near Guangzhou, China. The joint venture between Peugeot and the Chinese follows last year's £50 million investment in China by Volkswagen of Germany.

MR ROBIN Stormonth-Darling, chairman of stockbrokers Laing and Cruickshank, has been appointed deputy-chairman of the Take-Over Panel. He takes over from Mr Martin Jacobs who gave up the post after being appointed deputy chairman of the new Securities and Investment Board.

THE European Commission yesterday called upon European Community countries to back plans for a new round of Gatt multilateral trade talks which it said should take account of both Western and Third World needs. A spokesman said the Commission believed trade ministers of the 30-nation Gatt General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade could begin talks in late 1986 if top officials agreed a programme in November 1985.

Year ended 31 December	1984	1983
Revenue	£247.2m	£207.0m
Profit before exceptional charge and taxation	£ 85.5m	£ 80.1m
Profit before taxation	£ 78.3m	£ 80.1m
Earnings for the year	£ 50.2m	£ 40.1m
Earnings per share	22.8p	18.5p
Dividends per share	10.0p	8.0p

The information shown above is extracted from the full financial statements for the years ended 31 December 1983 and 1984. The full financial statements for the year ended 31 December 1983 have been filed with the Registrar of Companies and the report of the auditors thereon was unqualified. The full financial statements for the year ended 31 December 1984 have not yet been reported upon by the auditors and have not yet been filed with the Registrar of Companies.

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Andrew Cornelius on the problems facing
an already depleted British fleet

Sea-change unlikely for beleaguered shipowners

AS BUDGET day approaches there are few grounds for optimism at the General Council of British Shipping, which speaks for the country's beleaguered shipping industry. Hosting yet another lunch to argue the case for shipping Mr Bill Menzies-Wilson, the president, who also chairs Ocean Transport & Trading, one of the few remaining publicly quoted shipping companies, repeats his well rehearsed plea for greater awareness by government of the critical problems facing the industry.

The British fleet has halved in the past decade. More than 25,000 merchant seamen have left the industry since the recession began to bite in 1980, most never to return. Britain is virtually alone in failing to offer its shipowners incentives to invest in new tonnage, or subsidise existing tonnage. The seemingly endless decline of the fleet also poses serious questions about whether the country could ever again mount an operation like the Falklands War, where the 49 merchant ships requisitioned by the Government played a vital role.

Mr Menzies-Wilson, ably supported by Mr Peter Le Cheine, a former Permanent Secretary at the Cabinet Office, and now director general of the GCBS, have lobbied Government at the highest levels. Mrs Thatcher joined them for lunch and echoed her support for the industry which contributes more than £2 billion each year to Britain's overseas earnings. This is £700 million a year more than the aviation industry, the shipping men told her.

Throw in the protectionism of the US and our European rivals, who doggedly prevent outsiders taking their coastal trades, and the shipowners have a strong case. British shipowners even have to cough up the entire £44 million annual bill for running Britain's lighthouses, which

weekend yachtsmen and fishermen use scot free.

To rub salt into the wound we also chip in £10 million a year to help pay for Irish lighthouses according to the terms of an Anglo-Irish agreement earlier this century which has yet to be amended.

Mr Menzies-Wilson insists: "We are not holding out a begging bowl. We are merely pointing out the problems. The Government has a choice. Either it helps out the industry, or it not shipowners will have to diversify into other areas."

The GCBS points to the spectacular success of companies like Trafalgar House, which owns Cunard, P&O, and British and Commonwealth, in non-shipping areas. "These companies no longer depend on shipping for profits," Mr Menzies-Wilson says.

Although these arguments are apparently being heard in Westminster, there is scant hope for shipowners in the forthcoming budget. Minor concessions are expected to encourage investment in second hand shipping, and also by specifying shipping as one of the industries where investors will qualify for the top rate tax relief available under the Business Expansion Scheme.

More significant are the longer term developments which are in hand at the Department of Transport, which has taken responsibility for shipping from the Department of Trade and Industry "so that all things that move are under one roof".

Mr David Mitchell, the minister responsible for shipping, displays none of the gloom about the future of the industry which is prevalent in the City of London. He admits that he is concerned by the recent indication of \$1 billion apiece investments in new tonnage by the US Lines and Evergreen, in Taiwan, whose new round-the-world services have sent shockwaves through an industry already fighting against over tonnage and slashed charter rates.

But Mr Mitchell will not concede ground on the major issues. "Some people say that we could never fight another Falklands," he says. But Mr Mitchell points out that there are between 700 and 800 vessels under the UK flag, another 400 UK-owned vessels registered in overseas dependencies and a further 250 flagged out to other nations, which could be requisitioned in an emergency.

Mr Mitchell also questions some of the GCBS figures on the declining fleet. "Over half of the decline in the UK fleet since 1975 is in tankers," he says. "That's not entirely unrelated to the fact that we used to import oil from the Middle East by tanker and we now bring in North Sea oil by pipeline. The UK also has the

second largest container fleet in Europe (after West Germany) and the seventh largest fleet in the world, which is more than enough to meet the UK's trading demands.

Meanwhile, the Department of Transport is ploughing ahead on several fronts in an attempt to overcome some of the problems of shipowners.

One of Mr Mitchell's first tasks when taking on the shipping portfolio was to improve relations between the Government and the industry, which were soured partly by the predecessor, Mr Ian Spurling, who won few friends by persistently criticising shipowners for poor efficiency and weak management.

Departmental efforts to improve safety and inspection procedures have also been intensified. More than 35 per cent of all ships docking in Britain are inspected, against the 25 per cent inspection target set by the EEC, in the continuing battle to wipe out old and unsafe capacity.

Mr Mitchell has also had discussions with the Irish Government about lighthouses, the Norwegian Government about the impossible task faced by British owners in trying to charter their offshore vessels in Norwegian waters, and introduced a study of lighthouse charges, which is considering whether it would be possible to offset some of the costs to yachtsmen.

A further study of Britain's shipping requirements in specific types of tonnage through to the 1990s is also due to report during the summer, to establish once and for all what size fleet we need for strategic reasons.

But Mr Mitchell is pinning most of his hopes on a major breakthrough in negotiations to determine a European shipping policy, which ends protectionism within the EEC, and on the outcome of long-standing discussions to prevent further protectionism in the US.

Shipowners remain sceptical about the outcome of these discussions. But Mr Mitchell is heartened by the fact that a final draft European shipping policy, to end protectionism, is likely to be ratified by the Council of Ministers within the next few weeks. Discussions with the US have also reached an advanced stage and could mean a commitment that there should be no further moves by the administration there to further protect its trades.

This agreement could take effect immediately and pave the way for further discussions to breakdown the protectionism which already exists, in the US, enshrined by the Jones Acts which give all coastal trades to US ships. The EEC initiative could take a further 18 months to take effect, Mr Mitchell admits.

Until then the industry has to bank on the budget to ease its problems.

TV that's twice the size of a tennis court

There's plenty of fun but not too much science at Japan's hitech fair, reports
Robert Hyman

scientific research institutes whose charms are little appreciated by industry or the public.

Colourful and imaginative, it is the carnival aspect of the exhibition that should attract the crowds — the organisers hope 20 million visitors will pass through the gates during the six-month run.

Sony Corporation hopes Expo 85 will be remembered for "Jumbotron," a television screen twice the size of a tennis court. The Mitsui Group believes it has a winner in the world's first waterpark, a funfair, a museum, a science centre, a youth and a robot by multiple projection techniques.

Anticipating an influx of children, a group of companies put up the world's big-

gest big wheel which is some 25 storeys high. Again with an eye on record books, the world's biggest, or most prolific tomato plant is on show in one of the Japanese government pavilions, with 10,000 tomatoes ripening in sunlight conveyed along optical fibres.

"See the future before it gets here" was the slogan of the Expo 85 promoters until they replaced it with a more logical catchphrase. If the original lofty concept was a preview of the twenty-first century, it gave way in the course of seven years' planning to a more mundane target of mounting a show that would draw crowds to the disdained Science City of Tsukuba and, with luck, pay back some of the \$2.5 billion sunk into this 260-acre site among the paddy fields.

So rather than aim for the

highest stars in the hi-tech armament, the fair settles for entertaining mechanics, sometimes only tenuously related to the theme of "dwelling and surroundings — science and technology for man at home."

The Jumbotron screen, for instance, does not make use of the VLSI (very large scale integrated circuit). Fujitsu designed its graphics show with a supercomputer but does not put one on display in its pavilion. Fujitsu introduces the world's largest robots, and elsewhere there are friendly robots that draw visitors' portraits and play musical instruments. But the most advanced robots in practical use are not here, but busily labouring on the assembly line in Nissan and Toyota factories.

"Don't expect to see the most advanced technology

here," warns Takemochi Ishii, a professor of Tokyo University who helped plan Expo 85. "What we wanted to show is rather the interface between man and technology." Dr Ishii, an adviser to the Prime Minister on science, makes the point that this world fair is less ambitious than the exhibition at Osaka 15 years ago.

The Osaka Fair took up three times as much land area, had 30 more countries participating, and was like Japan's "coming out party" at a time when the nation was flushed with the forward momentum of high growth. Fifteen years ago Japan needed to reach ahead of itself to make an international impact.

"Now Japan does not have to advertise its abilities. We are more self-confident," says Dr Ishii.

"1984 was an outstanding year for the Group — not only in terms of financial success."

It saw great growth in awareness, across the world, of our name and capability, and it witnessed major developments in both product range and geographical spread."

Copies of the Annual Report will be posted to all shareholders on 4th April 1985. If you would like a copy, please write to The Secretary.

Kleinwort Benson 20 Fenchurch Street
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The International Merchant Bank

1984 results of Kleinwort, Benson, Lonsdale plc for the year ended 31st December 1984	1984	1983
	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
Profit before taxation	\$44.5m	\$32.5m
Profit after taxation	\$30.3m	\$21.7m
Earnings per share	54.1p	39.7p
Total dividend per share	14p	12p
Shareholders' funds	\$253m	\$215m
Capital resources	\$416m	\$292m
Total assets	\$4,702m	\$4,240m

THE "SMALL" TRANSPORT AND TRADING COMPANY, ETC.
NOTICE is hereby given that a balance of the Register will be placed on Wednesday, 17th April 1985, for the registration of shares for a Final Dividend for the year 1984 of 22.10p per £25 ordinary share. If approved at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 22nd May 1985, the dividend will be paid on 28th May 1985.
For transcripts to receive this dividend, their transfers must be lodged with the Company Secretary, Lloyd's Bank Plc, 100 Broad Street, London EC2M 5TH, on or before 11.00 a.m. on 17th April 1985.
SHARE WARRANTS TO BEARER
The Owners of the shares for the above dividend will be No. 172 which must be left at Lloyd's Bank Plc, 100 Broad Street, London EC2M 5TH, at least 14 days before the dividend is paid. The warrants may be surrendered through Mr. L. J. CHISTENMAN, Company Secretary.
Shell Centre, London, SE1 7NA
14th March 1985.

TDG
IN 1984

- Record profit, with strong growth in second six-months
- Excellent results from cold storage companies; recovery by reinforcement businesses
- Road haulage earnings improved but profits held back by cost of establishing new overnight freight service
- Substantial investment in distribution stores and facilities
- Overseas companies now account for 40% of capital employed
- Capital expenditure during 1984, £47 million, much of which has yet to contribute to profit
- Groundwork of past year will benefit results in 1985 which should be another good year

RESULTS IN BRIEF	1984	1983	%
	£m	£m	
Turnover	434.7	367.7	+18%
Profit before tax	24.1	21.0	+15%
Earnings per share	10.83p	10.12p	+7%
Dividend per share	5.6p	5.0p	+12%

Full report and accounts available after 3 April 1985 from the Secretary, Transport Development Group PLC, Kingsgate House, 66-74 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6SR.
ROAD HAULAGE · STORAGE · DISTRIBUTION · REINFORCEMENT · REPAIRS · PLANT HIRE

A year of growth worldwide

Results in Brief	1984	1983
	£m	£m
Turnover	1156.5	951.9
Trading Profit	93.8	73.4
Interest	19.3	12.2
Profit before Taxation	74.5	61.2
Taxation	16.5	14.9
Profit after Taxation	58.0	46.3
Preference dividends	0.1	0.1
Profit attributable to ordinary shareholders before extraordinary items	57.9	46.2
Earnings per ordinary share	36.0p	30.9p

- * Pre-tax profits up 22%. Earnings per share up 17%.
- * Final ordinary dividend 7.4p per share. Total ordinary dividend up 13%.
- * Strong performance in North America.
- * One-fifth profits from snacks and groceries — one-third from North America.
- * A record amount spent on capital investment, all financed from group cash flow, and balance sheet still strong.
- * Profit growth in all UK businesses and in Europe.
- * Return on Shareholders Funds up from 12.8% to 13.8%. Return on assets improving.
- * New management structure to foster growth.



Rowntree Mackintosh

Leaders to give national union chance to end overtime ban

Three coalfields agree to accept wage increases

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

Leaders of the Nottinghamshire, South Derbyshire and Leicestershire coalfields agreed in principle yesterday to bypass the national union and accept at area level the payment of wages increases withheld for the past two years.

The South Derbyshire and Leicestershire areas unions also agreed to join Nottinghamshire in lifting the overtime ban in their areas. But they said they would first give the union's national leadership a chance to call an immediate meeting of the national executive to call off the national overtime ban.

The joint statement was issued after an unprecedented meeting of the leaders of the three areas. They intend to form a permanent bloc opposed to the current leadership.

It is thought unlikely that the national executive will call off the ban. The last two years' wage increases have been held back by the National Coal Board due to the overtime ban.

The statement said that the national union was not entitled to sanction the proposed individual ballot of the membership called to authorise a 50p week levy to relieve hardship among miners sacked during the dispute.

The three unions pointed out that the general secretary, Peter Heathfield, was "not the present time allowed to administer any of the funds of the national union, and this only result in additional funds and levies being put in the hands of the receiver."

It is likely that if the levy is not approved, the Nottinghamshire will simply refuse to participate, although the other two areas are undecided.

Mr Roy Lynk, finance officer of the Nottinghamshire area, made it clear that the three areas intended forming a permanent anti-left bloc within the union. The grouping is seeking the support of other areas, notably Lancashire and the Midlands, where the majority of miners were working by the end of the dispute.

Mr Lynk said: "I would hope and expect other areas to join us. We intend to meet regularly and be a forum for democracy within the union."

The chances of the anti-left bloc making progress depends on the elections on March 25 for the seats on the national executive.

Opponents of the strike are hoping to oust Mr Ray Chubb and Mr Henry Richardson in Nottinghamshire, Mr Jim Colgan in the Midlands and Mr Sid Vincent in Lancashire.

Mr Lynk and the areas pension officer, Mr David Prendergast, are challenging Mr Chubb and Mr Richardson, as are three other branch officials.

The Nottinghamshire area confined last night that it would seek court hearing, probably within a week, to lift the injunction banning the area from sacking Mr Henry Richardson, its leftwing general secretary. Mr Richardson won an injunction yesterday quashing his sacking by the area executive on Monday.

Leaders of the Yorkshire area union met the four Yorkshire area NCB directors for the first time since last March when the future of Cortonwold colliery was on the agenda. The talks were described as useful by both sides. The Yorkshire union is seeking the reinstatement of 200 miners sacked or suspended during the dispute in the area.

The Commons select committee on employment announced last night that it would hold an inquiry into the issue of the dismissals.

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The three Britons freed by the Angolan guerrillas giving a press conference yesterday. Left to right: Glen Dixon, John Michael and Paul Higgins

Jenkin rejects talks and warns rate rebels

By John Carvel, Local Government Correspondent

Mr Patrick Jenkin yesterday tightened the screw on the rebel rate-capped councils by refusing their latest request for negotiations and warning that a series of government payments to them will cease on April 1 if they persist in refusing to set a rate.

He made it clear that he would have nothing more to do with the campaign group of Labour councillors, led by Mr David Blunkett of Sheffield.

Mr Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, also pointed out that the eight London boroughs which are still defying the Rates Act must make their first precept payments to the Metropolitan Police and London Regional Transport by April 1.

Should they fail to do so, interest would be charged on the outstanding amount, he said. It is possible that individual councillors would be held personally liable for the extra cost.

Mr Jenkin reminded the authorities: "If their failure to set a rate leads to loss or deficiency, and the auditor considers this results from wilful misconduct, then those responsible may be surcharged." Any surcharge bill on an individual of more than £2,000 would lead to automatic disqualification, he said.

This combination of warnings is clearly designed to bring pressure on the Labour councillors to end their defiance before the start of the new financial year.

Following the decision of the council on Wednesday, six rate-capped authorities have agreed to set a legal rate, leaving 11 still defiant, alongside Liverpool and Manchester which are not rate-capped but are subject to severe grant penalties.

Rate-capped Hackney Council has warned its unions that their members may not be paid next month, because the authority will have run out of money and has been forbidden by court order from borrowing until it fixes a rate. The incident is likely to test whether council workers will continue to support the campaign against rate-capping when they begin to feel the consequences.

Mr Jenkin's warnings came in a parliament answer to Mr John Watson, Tory MP for Slipton and Ripon. He said that the councils which passed no-rate resolutions last week had been able to do so without fear of any legal consequences at this stage.

"These councils have repeatedly said that they intend to negotiate with the Government to seek the withdrawal of the Rates Act, the revoking of the rate support grant settlement with the payment of substantial sums of additional grant to support higher levels of spending," he said.

Mr Blunkett, however, had written on their behalf earlier this week asking for further negotiations.

"There is no question of negotiations on these issues," Mr Jenkin said.

Jenkin said. He saw no purpose in a further meeting "with the ad hoc and unrepresentative groups led by Councillor Blunkett."

Warning councils of their duty to make a rate, Mr Jenkin said that if councils failed to provide him with spending estimates he would have to make his own, for calculating the grants entitled to them. His legal advisers said that he should stop making certain payments to councils which had failed to set a rate.

These included rent rebate subsidies, grants towards rate relief for disabled people, compensation for loss of rate income in enterprise zones, and contributions in lieu of rates on Crown and diplomatic properties.

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Mr Smith admitted that more could have been done to prevent trouble. "It was a sad thing that groups of supporters were arriving on coaches drunk," he said. "We have taken the name of these coaches companies and forwarded them to the police to take the necessary action."

Luton officials revealed that the club received abusive telephone calls before the game, many of them threatening personal injury.

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Doctor wins top damages for race prejudice

By David Hencke, Social Services Correspondent

A SENIOR doctor has been awarded record damages of £5,000 for racial discrimination after North-west Thames regional health authority failed to appoint him as consultant at Ashford Hospital in Middlesex.

The authority has also been urged by the industrial tribunal to offer her an equivalent job by September.

Dr Mallika Noor, a qualified microbiologist born in Sri Lanka, took her case to the central London industrial tribunal after failing to get a series of jobs in London and the south-east.

She also has a case pending against the South-west Thames regional health authority, alleging racial discrimination over a similar appointment.

The case brought under Section Four of the Race Relations Act, 1976, resulted in a three-day hearing but was unanimously upheld by the tribunal.

Details of the reasons for the judgment are to be released in three weeks. It is understood that some doctors felt that Dr Noor was not one of the top appointments at the hospital.

The Commission for Racial Equality yesterday welcomed the ruling. A spokesman said: "We are delighted. The award of £5,000 damages is the highest that has ever been made for racial discrimination."

"The previous highest award was £750, many are just under £100 or £200, and some as low as £50. It is the first time a tribunal has set a recommended date that someone should get an offer of an equivalent job."

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